Computer mediated communication and disability support: addressing barriers to study for undergraduate distance learners with long-term health problems

Thesis

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Computer Mediated Communication and Disability Support: Addressing Barriers to Study for Undergraduate Distance Learners with Long-term Health Problems

Thesis Appendices

Margaret Debenham
B.A. (Honours), The Open University, 1990

Volume 2 of 2

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Technology, The Open University, Milton Keynes

October 2001
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Appendices

Appendix A: Documents relating to the Exploratory Study (Chapter 4)

Appendix B: Documents relating to Intervention Study 1 (Chapter 5)

Appendix C: Documents relating to Intervention Study 2 (Chapter 6)

Appendix D: Documents relating to the Personal Interviews (Chapter 7)
Appendix A:
Documents relating to the Exploratory Study (Chapter 4)

A1 Copy of student questionnaire
A2 Breakdown of numbers by gender and age
A3 Full breakdown of illnesses represented in sample
A4 Illustration tables of ‘best’ and ‘worst’ case scenarios for each section of the questionnaire
A5 Breakdown of questionnaires responses for Section 3 of Exploratory Study questionnaire (N = 281)
A6 Letter published by ‘Sesame’ (Open University newspaper) August 1994
A8 Copy of letter of ‘Invitation to participate in research’, July 1994
A9 Copy of letter to researcher outlining support for work offered by Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) of the Open University, July 1994
A10 Copy of covering letter issued to potential participants on their database by OSD, July 1994
A11 Copy of letter of thanks issued by researcher to respondents to questionnaire, February 1996
Appendix A-I

Research Questionnaire for Students with Long term Health Problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Student No:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td>Region:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age:</td>
<td>Telephone No:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation:</td>
<td>Courses taken:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category of Illness (eg MS, ME)</td>
<td>Current course:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section 1.

Physical ability to cope with the following elements of study.

Compared with your own ability to cope when completely fit, how do you rate your ability to cope with the following on a scale of 1 - 100 (where 1 = barely able to cope and 100 = no problem)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TMAs</th>
<th>Rating (1-100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading/studying text of units and set books</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV programmes</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio programmes</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timescale allowed for the completion of TMAs</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to concentrate</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical writing of TMAs</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you use a word processor? Yes/No

In your own words, please expand as you wish on any of the above answers; is there anything you find/would find particularly helpful?
**Tutorials**

I am able to attend face to face tutorials  Yes/No

If 'Yes', then please answer the following on a scale of 1-100 (as before where 1 = barely able to cope and 100 = no problem). If 'No' move to next section, "Additional or substitute support for Tutorials and Summer School"

**Rating (1-100)**

Travel ..... 

Mobility ..... 

Access to tutorial venues ..... 

Fatigue ..... 

Ability to concentrate ..... 

Atmospheric (smoking etc.) ..... 

Being in a crowded place ..... 

In your own words please expand as you wish on any of the above; do you have any other particular needs?

---

*Additional or substitute support for Tutorials and Summer School*

Have you had any of the following support? Please answer Yes/No, and if 'Yes' rate on a scale of 1-100 (where 1 = not considered helpful at all and 100 = excellent help which could not be bettered).

**Rating (1-100)**

Home visit from Tutor (Yes/No) ..... 

Individual telephone tutorial (Yes/No) .....
Additional or substitute support for Tutorials and Summer School (continued)

Conference call telephone tutorial with several other students and tutor (Yes/No) ....

Course based computer conference (Yes/No) ....

Self help group (Yes/No) ....

In your own words please expand as you wish on any of your answers and give details of any support you have found particularly helpful/unhelpful.

Summer School

I have attended Summer School alone Yes/No

To attend Summer School I need the aid of a personal helper Yes/No

If 'Yes', then please rate your ability to cope with the following on a scale of 1-100 (as in TMA's where 1 = barely able to cope and 100 = no problem), using the appropriate column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Without helper Rating (1-100)</th>
<th>With helper Rating (1-100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summer School (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Without helper Rating (1-100)</th>
<th>With helper Rating (1-100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial Sessions</td>
<td>....</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social get together</td>
<td>....</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>....</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In your own words please expand as you wish on any of the above. Do you have any particular needs which are not currently addressed?

Exams

I am able to attend examination centres Yes/No. If 'Yes' then please rate your ability to cope with the following on a scale of 1-100 (as before where 1 = barely able to cope and 100 = no problem). If 'No', please move on to home based exam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rating (1-100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Limit</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems with writing</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In your own words please expand as you wish on any of the above and any additional needs/problems not mentioned.
Additional space for own words on exams

Home based exam

Please rate the following on a scale of 1-100 (as before where 1 = barely able to cope and 100 = no problem).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating (1-100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems with writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you use any writing aids (e.g. word processor, microwriter)? Yes/No. If 'Yes', please specify

Any other comments in your own words - please expand as you wish on any of the above answers

Section 2.

Support Services.

On a scale of 1 - 100 (where 1 = little or no help and 100 = excellent), how helpful/unhelpful have you found the support services listed below?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating (1-100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Tutor (current course)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous Course Tutors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutor Counsellor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Disability Advisor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Support Services continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Rating (1-100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disability Office</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUSA rep.</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer School helper</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In your own words, please expand as you wish on any of the above answers.

Section 3

Proposed Research Project

Do you have access to a personal computer? Yes/No

Do you have access to a telephone line? Yes/No

If 'Yes' to both of these, have you used the OU CoSy computer conferencing system to support your study in any course you have taken? Yes/No. If 'Yes', please specify.

If 'Yes', then have you found it to be useful? Please comment in your own words.

Whether or not you at present have access to a PC, if the necessary equipment could be made available (possibly by loan of the equipment), would you like to be considered to take part in an experimental computer supported group giving access to the following:

a) tutor counselling support Yes/No/Unsure

b) course self help group supported by computer conferencing Yes/No/Unsure
Proposed Research Project continued

c) social peer group support via computer conferencing. (that is to say 'chat' either 'one to one', in a 'conversation', which is informal chat amongst a few students, or in a bigger 'chat' conference which is the electronic equivalent of a coffee bar. Contacts made in this way may be based anywhere in the UK, not just locally and access via the phone line is almost always available at local rate telephone charge) Yes/No/ Unsure.

If you are not sure and would like to know more, I have an article which explains the basics which I can send to you on request. Please indicate below if you would like a copy. If the study goes ahead, the number of students invited to take part will of necessity be limited since this will be a pilot experiment. The final decision of who will be selected to take part will rest with the University.

Article requested Yes/No

Finally one more question. Would you be willing for me to telephone you to discuss your answers further in a telephone interview if this seems appropriate? Yes/No

As stated in the letter of invitation to take part in the research, the data from the questionnaires will be entered in a computer database for anonymous statistical use only. Please indicate your consent to this by signing below.

Signed .................................................................

Thank you for your help in completing this questionnaire, which will be of great help in understanding the needs of students with long term health problems.

Margaret Debenham BA Hons (Open)

Please return the completed questionnaire as soon as possible to:

Margaret Debenham
9, Drake Road
Wells
Somerset
BA5 3JX

Please use the remaining space to expand on any answer for which you have had insufficient space.

July 1994 Margaret Debenham
Appendix A-2

Breakdown of student sample by illness and student status

Sample size = 281

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illness</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Postgraduate</th>
<th>Associate</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allergy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthritis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asthma</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brittle Bones</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back problems</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cerebral Palsy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dystonia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphysema</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epilepsy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart disease</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intestinal problems</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidney disease</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liver problems</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muscular Dystrophy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myniares Disease</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Sclerosis</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myalgic Encephalomyelitis</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myositis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neurological problems</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parkinson's Disease</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pelvic Inflammation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schizophrenia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stroke</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undiagnosed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A-3

Full list of illnesses suffered, including secondary conditions

Illnesses

Allergies
Amputee
Arthritis
Asthma
Brittle bone disease
Back problems
Cancer
Crohn's disease
Coeliac disease
Cerebral Palsy
Deafness
Diabetes
Depression
Dystonia
Emphysema
Epilepsy
Heart disease
Hypertension
Intestinal problems
Kidney problems
Liver failure
Muscular Dystrophy
Myalgic Encephalomyelitis
Myasthenia Gravis
Migraine
Meniere's disease
Multiple Sclerosis
Myositis
Narcolepsy
Neurological problems
Osteoporosis
Parkinson's disease
Pelvic inflammation
Pituitary problems
Partially sighted
Schizophrenia
Stroke
Stammer
Thyroid problems
Undiagnosed
Appendix A4

Tables of illustration of 'best case' and 'worst case' scenarios for the following sections of the Exploratory Study questionnaire

Table of contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1</td>
<td>Home study components: (TMAs) Ability to cope with various aspects of home study</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2</td>
<td>Ability to cope with tutorial attendance</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tables 3 and 3b</td>
<td>Ability to cope with Examinations</td>
<td>5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tables 4a, 4b and 4c</td>
<td>Ability to cope with Residential School activities</td>
<td>7-9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix A4 Table 1
Home study components (TMAs): Ability to cope with various aspects of home study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whole sample (N = 281)</th>
<th>Percentage of sample coping at:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>76 -100 on Coping scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying units/set books (1)</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying TV programmes (2)</td>
<td>60.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying radio programmes (3)</td>
<td>52.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completing assignments on time (4)</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties with physically writing (5)</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects of fatigue on elements 1-5 above</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects of concentration difficulties on Elements 1-5 above</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Multiple Sclerosis (N = 110)**

| Studying units/set books (1) | 43.5% | 27.0% |
| Studying TV programmes (2) | 77.3% | 11.8% |
| Studying radio programmes (3) | 70.9% | 9.1% |
| Completing assignments on time (4) | 36.4% | 33.6% |
| Difficulties with physically writing (5) | 20.9% | 57.3% |
| Effects of fatigue on elements 1-5 above | 7.3% | 74.5% |
| Effects of concentration difficulties on Elements 1-5 above | 23.6% | 50.0% |

**Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (N = 87)**

| Studying units/set books (1) | 10.9% | 50.0% |
| Studying TV programmes (2) | 31.5% | 30.4% |
| Studying radio programmes (3) | 21.8% | 29.9% |
| Completing assignments on time (4) | 16.1% | 50.6% |
| Difficulties with physically writing (5) | 17.2% | 62.1% |
| Effects of fatigue on elements 1-5 above | 4.6% | 80.5% |
| Effects of concentration difficulties on Elements 1-5 above | 4.6% | 75.9% |

**Diabetes (N = 24)**

| Studying units/set books (1) | 41.4% | 48.3% |
| Studying TV programmes (2) | 55.2% | 31.0% |
| Studying radio programmes (3) | 62.5% | 12.5% |
| Completing assignments on time (4) | 54.2% | 25.0% |
| Difficulties with physically writing (5) | 58.3% | 33.3% |
| Effects of fatigue on elements 1-5 above | 45.8% | 37.5% |
| Effects of concentration difficulties on Elements 1-5 above | 33.3% | 33.3% |

**Epilepsy (N = 14)**

| Studying units/set books (1) | 57.1% | 14.3% |
| Studying TV programmes (2) | 64.3% | 14.3% |
| Studying radio programmes (3) | 57.1% | 21.4% |
| Completing assignments on time (4) | 42.9% | 28.6% |
| Difficulties with physically writing (5) | 64.3% | 28.6% |
| Effects of fatigue on elements 1-5 above | 28.6% | 42.9% |
| Effects of concentration difficulties on Elements 1-5 above | 28.6% | 50.0% |

**Arthritis (N = 10)**

| Studying units/set books (1) | 20.0% | 60.0% |
| Studying TV programmes (2) | 60.0% | 30.0% |
| Studying radio programmes (3) | 50.0% | 20.0% |
| Completing assignments on time (4) | 50.0% | 30.0% |
| Difficulties with physically writing (5) | 10.0% | 90.0% |
| Effects of fatigue on elements 1-5 above | 20.0% | 80.0% |
| Effects of concentration difficulties on Elements 1-5 above | 20.0% | 70.0% |
## Appendix A4 Table 2
### Ability to cope with tutorial attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'All categories' Sample</th>
<th>Percentage of sample (N) coping at:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>76-100 on Coping Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel to tutorial venues (N = 210)</td>
<td>47.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal mobility problems at venues (N = 207)</td>
<td>43.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems with access at venues (N = 206)</td>
<td>53.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems with stuffy atmosphere (N = 203)</td>
<td>61.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects of fatigue on study at tutorials (N = 212)</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Multiple Sclerosis
- Travel to tutorial venues (N = 83) | 44.6% | 38.6% |
- Personal mobility problems at venues (N = 81) | 32.1% | 51.9% |
- Problems with access at venues (N = 81) | 49.4% | 34.6% |
- Problems with stuffy atmosphere (N = 82) | 73.2% | 18.3% |
- Effects of fatigue on study at tutorials (N = 82) | 63.4% | 22.0% |
- Effects of difficulties of concentration (N = 83) | 19.5% | 54.9% |

### Myasthenia Encephalomyelitis
- Travel to tutorial venues (N = 62) | 33.9% | 49.0% |
- Personal mobility problems at venues (N = 60) | 35.0% | 40.0% |
- Problems with access at venues (N = 61) | 49.2% | 36.1% |
- Problems with stuffy atmosphere (N = 58) | 46.6% | 44.8% |
- Problems being in a crowded place (N = 64) | 34.4% | 45.3% |
- Effects of fatigue on study at tutorials (N = 64) | 6.3% | 71.9% |
- Effects of difficulties of concentration (N = 63) | 7.8% | 65.6% |

### Diabetes
- Travel to tutorial venues (N = 21) | 66.7% | 19.0% |
- Personal mobility problems at venues (N = 22) | 72.7% | 27.3% |
- Problems with access at venues (N = 22) | 68.2% | 22.7% |
- Problems with stuffy atmosphere (N = 21) | 76.2% | 9.5% |
- Problems being in a crowded place (N = 22) | 86.4% | 9.1% |
- Effects of fatigue on study at tutorials (N = 22) | 50.0% | 36.4% |
- Effects of difficulties of concentration (N = 22) | 54.6% | 13.6% |

### Epilepsy
- Travel to tutorial venues (N = 11) | 72.7% | 18.2% |
- Personal mobility problems at venues (N = 11) | 81.8% | 18.2% |
- Problems with access at venues (N = 10) | 70.0% | 20.0% |
- Problems with stuffy atmosphere (N = 10) | 70.0% | 20.0% |
- Problems with being in a crowded place (N = 10) | 70.0% | 20.0% |
- Effects of fatigue on study at tutorials (N = 11) | 54.6% | 36.4% |
- Effects of difficulties of concentration (N = 11) | 45.5% | 27.3% |

### Arthritis
- Travel to tutorial venues (N = 8) | 37.5% | 50.0% |
- Personal mobility problems at venues (N = 8) | 12.5% | 87.5% |
- Problems with access at venues (N = 8) | 12.5% | 75.0% |
- Problems with stuffy atmosphere (N = 7) | 71.4% | 28.6% |
- Problems being in a crowded place (N = 8) | 62.5% | 25.0% |
- Effects of fatigue on study at tutorials (N = 8) | 25.0% | 75.0% |
- Effects of difficulties of concentration (N = 8) | 25.0% | 62.5% |
<table>
<thead>
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<th>76 - 100 on Coping Scale</th>
<th>Below 50 on Coping Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>At centre (N = 124)</td>
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<td>30.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At home (N = 111)</td>
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<td>38.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical writing in examinations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At centre (N = 126)</td>
<td>46.0%</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At home (N = 108)</td>
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<td>63.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects of fatigue on taking of examination</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At centre (N = 127)</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
<td>52.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At home (N = 118)</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>66.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects of concentration difficulties on taking of examination</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At centre (N = 125)</td>
<td>36.0%</td>
<td>40.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At home (N = 117)</td>
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<td>47.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Multiple Sclerosis**

| Travel to centres (N = 37) | 51.4% | 32.4% |
| Personal mobility at centres (N = 36) | 50.0% | 36.1% |
| Problems with access at venue (N = 36) | 58.3% | 25.0% |
| Time limit for examination | | |
| At centre (N = 36) | 38.9% | 27.8% |
| At home (N = 53) | 50.9% | 28.3% |
| Physical writing in examinations | | |
| At centre (N = 36) | 33.3% | 44.4% |
| At home (N = 50) | 16.0% | 70.0% |
| Effects of fatigue on taking of examination | | |
| At centre (N = 37) | 29.7% | 54.1% |
| At home (N = 58) | 15.5% | 56.9% |
| Effects of concentration difficulties on taking of examination | | |
| At centre (N = 36) | 36.1% | 41.7% |
| At home (N = 57) | 33.3% | 40.4% |

**Myalgic Encephalomyelitis**

| Travel to centres (N = 39) | 48.7% | 25.6% |
| Personal mobility at centres (N = 41) | 53.7% | 22.00% |
| Problems with access at venue (N = 39) | 66.7% | 15.4% |
| Time limit for examination | | |
| At centre (N = 38) | 26.3% | 36.8% |
| At home (N = 31) | 32.3% | 48.4% |
| Physical writing in examinations | | |
| At centre (N = 39) | 41.0% | 38.5% |
| At home (N = 33) | 21.2% | 57.6% |
| Effects of fatigue on taking of examination | | |
| At centre (N = 39) | 12.8% | 71.8% |
| At home (N = 33) | 9.1% | 81.8% |
| Effects of concentration difficulties on examination | | |
| At centre (N = 39) | 15.4% | 59.0% |
| At home (N = 33) | 9.1% | 63.6% |
### Appendix A4 Table 3b

#### Ability to cope with Examinations (Diabetes, Epilepsy and Arthritis samples)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Below 60 on Coping Scale</th>
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<tr>
<td>Personal mobility at centres (N = 18)</td>
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<td>16.7%</td>
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<td>Problems with access at venue (N = 18)</td>
<td>88.9%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Time limit for examination</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>At home (N = 5)</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Physical writing in examinations</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>27.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>At home (N = 5)</td>
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<td>60.0%</td>
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<td><strong>Effects of fatigue on taking of examination</strong></td>
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<td>33.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>At home (N = 5)</td>
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<td>40.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Effects of concentration difficulties on taking examination</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>At centre (N = 18)</td>
<td>72.2%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
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<td>At home (N = 5)</td>
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<td>40.0%</td>
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<td>Personal mobility at centres (N = 11)</td>
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<td><strong>Time limit for examination</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>At home (N = 2)</td>
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<td>50.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Physical writing in examinations</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>At centre (N = 11)</td>
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<td>45.5%</td>
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<td>At home (N = 2)</td>
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<td>50.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Effects of fatigue on taking of examination</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>45.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>At home (N = 2)</td>
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<td>50.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Effects of concentration on taking of examination</strong></td>
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<td>At centre (N = 11)</td>
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<td>At home (N = 2)</td>
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<td>50.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Arthritis</strong></td>
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<td>33.3%</td>
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<td>At home (N = 6)</td>
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<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical writing in examinations</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>At centre (N = 3)</td>
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<td>66.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>At home (N = 5)</td>
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<td>100.0%</td>
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<td><strong>Effects of fatigue on taking of examination</strong></td>
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<td>83.3%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>66.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At home (N = 6)</td>
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<td>66.7%</td>
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### Appendix A4 Table 4a

**Ability to cope with attendance at Residential School**
('All categories’ sample and MS sample)

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<th>Category</th>
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<td>All categories' sample</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel to Summer School</td>
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<tr>
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<td>With helper (N = 99)</td>
<td>76.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance at Summer School tutorials</td>
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<td>With helper (N = 93)</td>
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<td>Attendance at social events</td>
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<td>With helper (N = 92)</td>
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<td>The effects of fatigue on full participation on Summer School activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multiple Sclerosis</td>
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<tr>
<td>With helper (N = 59)</td>
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<td>With helper (N = 54)</td>
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<td>The effects of fatigue on full participation in Summer School activities</td>
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<td>65.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With helper (N = 60)</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- 85 students from the whole (All categories) sample were currently unable to attend Residential School
- 25 students from the MS sample were currently unable to attend Residential School
Appendix A4 Table 3b
Ability to cope with Examinations (Diabetes, Epilepsy and Arthritis samples)

<table>
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<th>Percentage of (N) coping at:</th>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel to centres (N = 18)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal mobility at centres (N = 18)</td>
<td>77.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problems with access at venue (N = 18)</td>
<td>88.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time limit for examination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At centre (N = 18)</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At home (N = 5)</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical writing in examinations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At centre (N = 18)</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At home (N = 5)</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effects of fatigue on taking of examination</td>
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<tr>
<td>At centre (N = 18)</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At home (N = 5)</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects of concentration difficulties on taking examination</td>
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<tr>
<td>At centre (N = 18)</td>
<td>72.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>At home (N = 5)</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
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<td><strong>Epilepsy</strong></td>
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<td>Travel to centres (N = 11)</td>
<td>81.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal mobility at centres (N = 11)</td>
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<td>At home (N = 2)</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>At centre (N = 11)</td>
<td>54.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>At home (N = 2)</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effects of fatigue on taking of examination</td>
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<tr>
<td>At centre (N = 11)</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At home (N = 2)</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects of concentration on taking of examination</td>
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<tr>
<td>At centre (N = 11)</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At home (N = 2)</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Arthritis</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Travel to centres (N = 3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal mobility at centres (N = 3)</td>
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<td>Problems with access at venue (N = 3)</td>
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<td>Time limit for examination</td>
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<tr>
<td>At centre (N = 3)</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At home (N = 6)</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
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<td>Physical writing in examinations</td>
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<td>At centre (N = 3)</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>At home (N = 5)</td>
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<td>Effects of fatigue on taking of examination</td>
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<tr>
<td>At centre (N = 3)</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>At home (N = 5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effects of concentration difficulties on taking of examination</td>
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<tr>
<td>At centre (N = 3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>At home (N = 6)</td>
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</table>
### Appendix A4 Table 4a

**Ability to cope with attendance at Residential School**

('All categories’ sample and MS sample)

<table>
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<th>Below 50 on Coping Scale</th>
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<td>31.7%</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>14.0%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>52.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel to Summer School</td>
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<tr>
<td>With helper (N = 60)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to cope with access problems</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alone (N = 41)</td>
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<tr>
<td>With helper (N = 59)</td>
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<td>16.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to cope with mobility problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Alone (N = 43)</td>
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<td>39.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With helper (N = 59)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>33.3%</td>
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<td>34.2%</td>
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<td>The effects of fatigue on full participation in Summer School activities</td>
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<tr>
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<td>9.3%</td>
<td>65.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With helper (N = 60)</td>
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<td>51.7%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

- 85 students from the whole (All categories) sample were currently unable to attend Residential School
- 25 students from the MS sample were currently unable to attend Residential School
### Appendix A4 Table 4b
#### Ability to cope with attendance at Residential School (ME and Diabetes samples)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Less than 50 on Coping Scale</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>30.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to cope with food related problems</td>
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<td>33.3%</td>
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<td>60.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accommodation related problems</td>
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<td>The effects of fatigue on full participation in Summer School activities</td>
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<td>Less than 50 on Coping Scale</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Ability to cope with access problems</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>With helper (N = 5)</td>
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<td>20.0%</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to cope with mobility problems</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone (N = 7)</td>
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<td>14.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>With helper (N = 5)</td>
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<td>00.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to cope with food related problems</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone (N = 7)</td>
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<td>28.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>With helper (N = 5)</td>
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<td>00.0%</td>
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<td>Attendance at Summer School tutorials</td>
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<td>14.3%</td>
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<td>The effects of fatigue on full participation in Summer School activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alone (N = 7)</td>
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<td>14.3%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>20.0%</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 36 students from the ME sample were currently unable to attend Residential School
- 6 students from the Diabetes sample were currently unable to attend Residential School
### Appendix A4 Table 4c

#### Ability to cope with attendance at Residential School

*(Epilepsy and Arthritis samples)*

<table>
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<th>Epilepsy</th>
<th>More than 75 on Coping Scale</th>
<th>Less than 50 on Coping Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travel to Summer School</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone (N =6)</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With helper (N = 2)</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>00.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ability to cope with access problems</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone (N =6)</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With helper (N =2)</td>
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<td>00.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ability to cope with mobility problems</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone (N =6)</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With helper (N = 2)</td>
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<td>00.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ability to cope with food related problems</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone (N =6)</td>
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<td>00.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With helper (N = 2)</td>
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<td>00.0%</td>
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<td><strong>Attendance at Summer School tutorials</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alone (N =5)</td>
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<td>00.0%</td>
</tr>
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<td>With helper (N = 2)</td>
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<td>00.0%</td>
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<td><strong>Attendance at social events</strong></td>
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<td>00.0%</td>
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<td><strong>Accommodation related problems</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone (N =5)</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>With helper (N = 2)</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>00.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The effects of fatigue on full participation in Summer School activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone (N =6)</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Alone (N =6)</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>With helper (N = 6)</td>
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<td>50.0%</td>
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<td><strong>Ability to cope with mobility problems</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alone (N = 5)</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With helper (N = 6)</td>
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<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ability to cope with food related problems</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone (N = 5)</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>00.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With helper (N = 6)</td>
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<td>00.0%</td>
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<td><strong>Attendance at Summer School tutorials</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone (N =5)</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With helper (N =6 )</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attendance at social events</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone (N = 5)</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With helper (N = 6)</td>
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<td>33.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Accommodation related problems</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alone (N = 5)</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With helper (N = 6)</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The effects of fatigue on full participation in Summer School activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone (N = 5)</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With helper N = 5)</td>
<td>00.0%</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 3 students from the Epilepsy sample were currently unable to attend Residential School
- 1 student from the Arthritis sample was currently unable to attend Residential School
## Appendix A-5

Breakdown of questionnaires responses for Section 3 of Exploratory Study questionnaire (N = 281)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Have computer (N = 189)</th>
<th>Don't have computer (N = 90)</th>
<th>Computer availability unspecified (N = 2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of respondents</td>
<td>% of N</td>
<td>Number of respondents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tutor counselling support on-line</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, wish to be considered to take part</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t wish to be considered</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing data</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>189</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course self help groups supported by computer conferencing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, wish to be considered to take part</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t wish to be considered</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing data</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>189</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social peer support via computer conferencing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, wish to be considered to take part</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>46.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t wish to be considered</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>189</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Readers may help my illness research

I HAVE recently been accepted as a part-time research student, my area of study being 'Investigation of difficulties of students with long term health problems and the extent to which they are disadvantaged'

My supervisors are Judy Emms and Gerald Hales. I am looking for students with such difficulties (in particular those with illnesses such as MS, ME and diabetes) who would be prepared to help me with this research by questionnaire, possible telephone interview and with the possibility of taking part in an experimental counselling support group at a later date. Would any interested students or anyone with a particular knowledge of supporting such students, please contact me.

Margaret Debenham
9 Drake Road, Wells
Somerset BA5 3UX
ROPOS...

Editor,

I recently been accepted as a part-time Research Student in the field of study being
tigation of difficulties of students with long-term health problems and the extent to which
be disadvantaged. I am looking for students with such difficulties (in particular those with
t’ like MS, ME, diabetes, etc.) who would be prepared to help me with this research by
naire, possible telephone interview, and with the possibility of taking part in an
mental counselling support group at a later date. I wonder if it is possible for you to print a
in Omega for any such students to contact me, or indeed for anyone with a particular
edge of supporting such students?

I'd be most grateful for your help

Sincerely,

Pet Debenham,
July 1994

Dear Student,

Invitation to participate in research.

I have recently begun work as a Research Student, my area of study being 'Investigation of difficulties of students with long term health problems and the extent to which they are disadvantaged'.

I am particularly looking for students with such illnesses as MS, ME, Diabetes, Epilepsy (and any other which falls into the category of variability of fitness) who would initially be prepared to help me in one or more ways.

- by answering a questionnaire which I will send to you about your experiences of studying
- by telephone interview/discussion, if this seems appropriate to me following my receipt of the completed questionnaire

At a later date there would be the possibility of participating in an experimental tutor counselling group and self help group using the medium of computer conferencing to link students with a tutor counsellor experienced in their problems and to each other for mutual support. The great advantage of this method is that it reduces isolation by enabling students living in many different places remote from each other to communicate easily, both individually and as a group. I speak from personal experience, both as a student with health problems, and as a user of CoSy (the OU computer conferencing system) since 1988 when I was one of the first DT200 students. In order to use CoSy it is necessary to have the basic equipment of the simplest form of a Personal Computer, a phone line and a modem (a small device which links the computer to the phone line). For those who don't have it and who are amongst those selected as suitable to take part, one of my tasks will be to explore the possibility of the loan of the equipment for the duration of the experimental period. If you are an Arts or Social Science student who has never used such equipment, please don't feel put off, it is not difficult to learn. I was an Arts student who had not had anything to do with computers before taking DT200.

However, whether or not you feel that you would wish to participate in the project, your help at this initial stage of establishing needs/problems by answering the questionnaire would be very valuable to me, and hopefully contribute significantly to furthering the understanding of the best help for the university to offer students in the future. If you are prepared to help I would be grateful if you could complete the attached form, giving your name, address and courses taken and in progress. All information will be treated as confidential; it will be entered into a computer database for anonymous statistical purposes only and your express permission will be asked should it seem appropriate to include any individual contributions in material to be published. Signature of the attached form will be taken as permission to enter the data into the database.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Debenham BA Hons. (Open)
July 1994

Ms M Debenham

Dear Ms Debenham,

Apologies for the delay in replying but I am now pleased to be able to confirm the extent of my office's support for your research project into the needs of students with long term health difficulties.

As agreed over the telephone, my office will send a mailing to students studying this year who are known to have ME or MS consisting of an explanatory letter from me (letter enclosed), your letter inviting participation in the project and your questionnaire. The mailing will be despatched in either week commencing 25 July or, more likely, 1st August. A recent computer selection indicates that somewhere in the region of 350 students will receive the mailing. We could have widened the selection considerably, but this would have added to the size of the mailing (which would have caused difficulties for my office) and perhaps have produced a larger response that you wanted. The computer selection gives a breakdown of 203 students with MS and 141 with ME.

Incidentally, I am conscious that I should have checked with you first before mentioning in my letter that you are... If you feel sensitive about this and want the reference removed, please let me know as soon as possible. My thinking was that students might be more inclined to complete the questionnaire and generally take an active part in the project if they knew that the researcher herself had long term health difficulties. I have invented a deadline of 16 September for the return of the questionnaire, which is slightly arbitrary I know, but which at least should ensure that you get most questionnaires back within a reasonably short period.

Confirm I am prepared to pay for the high speed modem. Please send me the supplier's invoice or proof of purchase if you have already bought the item. I am also happy to contribute up to a further £100 towards your costs and leave it to you to decide how this can best be used.

Thank you for the two articles on COSY and computer conferencing. I will file them for now, but may use them, with your permission, should the office receive future enquiries about teleconferencing facilities. A list of Regional Disability Advisers and Senior Counsellors with special responsibility for disabled students is enclosed.

Finally, I recently mentioned your name to Vic Finkelstein the Chair of the OU Disabled Students and Staff Group, and said that you would be contacting him or the Secretary Ann Malone about the Group's activities.

Yours sincerely,

Ralph

Ralph Keats
Assistant Registrar
(Students with Disabilities)

Enc [ ]
July 1994

Dear Student

Research project on long-term ill health

An OU research student has recently begun work on a project to investigate the nature and extent of difficulties faced by students with long-term health problems and their possible study needs. The student concerned is Margaret Debenham who is herself (starred) and who lives in [redacted] in Somerset.

Margaret's research project looks interesting and will I hope produce findings that will assist the University in reviewing the support provided to such students. I have therefore agreed to help Margaret by writing to students most closely matching her chosen subject group to invite them to take part in her project.

I enclose two items for your attention:

- a letter from Margaret explaining the research project and inviting you to take part
- a questionnaire for you to complete (if you agree to take part in the project) and send to Margaret. PLEASE DO NOT SEND THE COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE OFFICE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. I should point out that Margaret's original plan was to issue the questionnaire only after students had confirmed their willingness to participate in the project, but I have persuaded her to mail the questionnaire with her letter of invitation for reasons of administrative convenience.

I leave it to you to decide whether or not to take part in Margaret's project. Please note that you are under no obligation to do so, and that this office has not supplied Margaret with any information about you as a student. The only way in which she will be able to access such information is if you choose to divulge it by sending her a completed questionnaire. Please try to return the completed questionnaire to Margaret by 16 September.

Yours sincerely

Ralph Keats
Assistant Registrar
(Students with Disabilities)

Encs

...[starred]: nature of research work problem has long-term health problems...
Dear Student

Open University Research project for students with Long Term Health Problems

Following the analysis of the 281 questionnaires received in response to my request for help in 1994 an extensive report is in preparation and will be published by the Institute of Educational Technology in due course.

Thank you very much for your help and cooperation in this research which is much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Debenham
Research Student
Institute of Educational Technology
The Open University
Walton Hall
Milton Keynes
MK7 6AA
Appendix B:
Documents relating to Intervention Study 1 (Chapter 5)

B1 Pre-participation student questionnaire

B2 Mid-session questionnaire

B3 End of year questionnaire

B4 Copy of counsellor record sheet template

B5 Breakdown of data for usage of facilities on Virtual Campus'

B6 Copy of letter of invitation to participate in pilot on-line counselling project issued to volunteer respondents to Exploratory Study questionnaire

B7 Copy of letter to participants regarding help with setting up software to access the Open University conferencing system (CoSy 4/Wigwam)

B8 Copy of message sent to participants by e-mail and by post with end of year questionnaire

B9 Copies of two memos issued by the on-line counsellor:
   (i) to Regional Senior counsellors and
   (ii) to the students' Regional Tutor counsellors explaining her role in the pilot project
Appendix B-1

CMC Counselling Project for Students with Disabilities
Pre-questionnaire

Name: Region:

Personal identifier: CoSy 4 id:

Which course(s) are you studying this year?

Section 1

Problem areas of study from past experience

What areas of study from your past experience have given you the most difficulty? (It may help to look at Section 2 to remind you of the different components of the study process)

Please give a short explanation of the reasons for the difficulty.

System set up

In round terms how long has it taken you to set up your computer and modem to reach the stage of being 'on line'?

What problems have you experienced in setting up, if any:-

a) with the hardware

b) with the software

Computer conferencing

Would you like to join the closed peer group support conference (DOORway)? (There are currently about 30 members of this conference most with many different disabilities/health problems. Membership provides social support and the opportunity to discuss issues relevant to those with disabilities in a confidential environment. Existing members have said that they find it very supportive.)

Yes/No
Prior statement:

Please give a short summary in your own words of what your expectations are at the beginning of this trial in using computer mediated communication for counselling and peer group support. You may feel that you don't know what to expect, and it may help to ask yourself why you want to take part. e.g. What do you hope to gain by using the medium? Do you foresee any problems? (Use more space if you wish)

Section 2

(This section is mainly intended to help the counsellor to understand your needs)

Study for continuous assessment

Do you have any particular known needs in studying units/set books for assignments? (The following aids can be readily obtained from the Office for Students with Disabilities for many courses. Please state if you are using them already, or you think that they would be useful to you)

* Comb bound units

* Audio taped units

Space for personal comments on other known needs.

Tutorials

1. Do you anticipate being able to attend tutorials? Yes/No.
   (If 'No' go on to 2)

If so, do you use the services of a helper to attend for:

* Travel

* Moving around the venue

* Note taking

* Any other need (please specify)
2. If you are not able to attend, would it be useful to you for:-

* A home visit from your tutor to be arranged?

* Or for a telephone tutorial to be arranged?

(There may be self help groups on the conferencing system for your course. To find out if one exists you will need to look at the list of conferences on the system and join it yourself).

Summer School

Does your course have a Summer School? Yes/No
(If 'No' go on to examinations)

If Yes, do you anticipate being able to attend? Yes/No
(If 'No' go on to examinations)

If you will be attending, do you need a helper for:-

* Travel

* Moving around the campus

* Helping with personal needs (getting into bed, bathing, tray carrying etc.) Please specify what level of help is appropriate

* Note taking

* Any other particular known needs (please specify)

Do you have your own preferred helper who can accompany you, Yes/No

If No, would you like a helper provided by the university? Yes/No
Examinations

Do you expect to be able to attend an examination centre to take your course exam this year?  Yes/No

If this is likely to be difficult, would you like a home based exam to be arranged?  Yes/No

Do you expect to need any of the following in the examination (either at a centre or at home)

* Extra time
* Rest periods
* Use of word-processing
* Amanuensis
* Large print examination paper
* Any other particular need (please specify)

Thank you for your help in completing this questionnaire.

Margaret Debenham
Appendix  B-2

On-line counselling pilot project for students with disabilities

Mid -session update - July 28th '96

Now that you have had the experience of using the system for a few months could I please ask you to answer a few questions so that I shall have data relating to use of the system on a ‘before’, ‘during’ and ‘after’ basis. (You will be asked to complete another questionnaire after the end of your course this year) ... 

... As before, the easiest way to complete the questionnaire will be to ‘cut and paste’ it into a word processing document, complete it there and then paste it back into a CoSy4/Wigwam message addressed to me. If anyone has any problems with doing this, you can ring me and I’ll talk you through the process. Or, if doing it is too difficult for dexterity reasons, let me know and I’ll post a hard copy for you to complete. Many thanks for your help!

Questions.

1. a) How often do you log on to CoSy at present?  
   (Once a day; more than once a day; every few days; once a week; only occasionally - please specify)

   b) Is your usage of the system increasing or decreasing?

2. a) Have you found it useful so far to have access to a counsellor on line?  
   Yes/No

   b) How many times have you needed to contact her to date? (Please specify - approximately if you can’t recall exactly)

   c) Please make any comments in the space provided below on how useful/helpful or otherwise you have found this service  
   (Use more space if you wish)

3. Approximately how many conferences have you joined? (Give number)
4. Are you participating actively in your conferences or do you prefer to 'lurk'? Or a mixture of both? Please specify and comment further below, using more space if necessary.

5. How useful have you found the following ways of using CoSy?

(Please specify by using one of the following: very useful / quite useful / not very useful / not at all / not joined any; further comments to elaborate on your answers in the space provided would be helpful. Please add more lines if necessary).

a) Using e-mail to mail others privately one to one?

b) Membership of DOOR_way support conference?

c) Membership of course self help groups?

(please say how many if you have joined more than one)

d) Membership of special interest group conferences?

(Please say how many, if any, you have joined)

e) Membership of chat lines? (for example the log-inn)

(Please say how many, if any, you have joined)
6. Have you experienced any technical problems with the system since set up? Yes/No  (If ‘Yes’ go to question 6a, if ‘No’, go to question 7)

6a. How often have you experienced the technical problems? (Frequently / occasionally / all the time - please specify)

6b. Were the technical problems resolved satisfactorily with the help of the help desk? Yes/No? (Please give brief details, and if ‘No’ go on to question 6c. If ‘Yes’ go on to question 7)

6c. If ‘No’ to question 6b what other source of help did you use to resolve the technical problems?

7. Have you encountered any other problems in your use of the system? Please give details below.

8. If there are any further points not already covered that you wish to raise or comments to make please use this space (and add lines as needed)

Many thanks for your time.<smile> Please complete and return to me within the next week if possible.

Margaret Debenham
Appendix  B-3

End of year questionnaire (1996) - CMC Counselling Project for Students with Long Term Health Problems

Name: - OU personal identifier: -
Region: -

Questions

Section 1: System Usage

1. How often were you logging on to CoSy at the end of the year? More than once a day ....
   (Please tick appropriate answer)
   Once a day ....
   Every few days ....
   Once a week ....
   Only occasionally ....

2. Since completing the mid-session questionnaire did your usage of the system increase or decrease? Increase ....
   (Please tick appropriate answer)
   Decrease ....
   (If possible, estimate to what extent here)

3. How important was the availability of an offline reader (as opposed to working on line)? Very important ....
   (Please tick the appropriate answer and expand in your own words if you wish)
   Quite important ....
   Not important ....
   Happy to work on line ....
4. In your own words, with the benefit of hindsight, how difficult do you feel it was technically to get the conferencing software up and running? How easy and reliable (in the technical sense) did you find CoSy by the end of the academic year?

Section 2: Counselling

1. How many times have you contacted your on-line counsellor during the year? (if none, go directly to Question 7)

   Number of times ....

2. Did you find your on-line counsellor approachable?

   (Please ring a numerical rating where 1 = 'not approachable at all' and 5 = 'very approachable')

   (Please expand your answer in your own words if necessary)

3. Did you find that your on-line counsellor understood the nature of the problem for which you were seeking help?

   (Please ring a numerical rating where 1 = 'did not understand well' and 5 = 'understood completely')

   (Again, expand in your own words if necessary - more space over page)
4. When you contacted your on-line counsellor how soon did she respond to your e-mail? (Please ring appropriate answer)
   - Same day ....
   - Next day ....
   - Longer ....
   (Please specify approximately how long)

5. Did your on-line counsellor take any action needed and let you know the outcome? (If No, go directly to Q7)

6. If Yes, were you satisfied with the action taken? (please ring a numerical rating for your satisfaction level where 1 = 'not satisfied at all' and 5 = 'very satisfied').
   - 1 2 3 4 5
   Please expand in your own words if appropriate.

7a. Did you also contact your regional Tutor counsellor for advice/help during the year? (If no, go on to Q8)

   Yes / No
7b If Yes, did you find the help given by your Regional Counsellor satisfactory?  

(Expand in your own words if you wish)

8a Did your on-line counsellor (to your knowledge) liaise with your Tutor counsellor on any problems you raised during the year? (If No, go on to Q9)  

Yes / No

8b If Yes, were you happy with the outcome?  

(Expand in your own words if necessary)

9. Would you be happy to receive on-line counselling in place of counselling from a Tutor Counsellor, if this were an option?  

(please expand on your answer if you wish- more space on next page)
10. In your own words, what advantages (if any) have you found in receiving counselling support on line (as compared with the traditional methods of telephone, letter or face to face)?

(As pointers you might like to think about what a counselling service via this medium can provide which would not otherwise be available. What are the snags? In what ways might the service be improved and developed?)

Section 3: Peer Group and Self Help Group Support

How useful have you found the following ways of using CoSy?

(Please ring a numerical rating in each of the following questions on a scale of 1 - 5 where 1 = 'not useful at all', and 5 = 'very useful' and expand on the reasons why in your own words.)

(Please indicate also by ticking the appropriate answer whether you participated actively, 'lurked' or a mixture of the two.)

1. Using e-mail to contact others on a one to one basis

(Usefulness scale)

1 2 3 4 5

(Please ring a numerical rating and expand in your own words if you wish)
2. Membership of the DOOR way support conference? (please ring a numerical rating)

( Tick the appropriate answer to say if you have participated actively, lurked or a mixture of the two)

(Please expand on the usefulness- or otherwise- in your own words)

Usefulness scale

1 2 3 4 5

Active participation ....

‘Lurk’ ....

Mixture of the two ....

3. Course based Self Help Groups?
(Please also say how many you have joined, if any)

(Please ring a numerical rating)

( Tick the appropriate answer to say if you have participated actively, lurked or a mixture of the two)

(Expand on usefulness - or otherwise in your own words if you wish - more space on next page)

Usefulness scale

1 2 3 4 5

Number joined .......

Participate actively ....

‘Lurk’ ....

Mixture of the two ....
4. **Special interest groups? (Please say how many you have joined, if any)**

(Number joined ....)

**Usefulness scale**

(Please ring a numerical rating)

1  2  3  4  5

(Pick the appropriate answer to say if you have participated actively, lurked or a mixture of the two)

(Participate actively ....)

'Lurk' ....

Mixture of the two ....

(Expand in your own words on usefulness - or otherwise - if you wish)
5. Informal ‘chat’ conferences (e.g. the Log Inn’? (Please say how many you have joined, if any) 

Number joined .......

Usefulness scale

(Please ring a numerical rating)

1 2 3 4 5

Participate actively ....

‘Lurk’ ....

Mixture of the two ....

(Expand in your own words on their usefulness - or otherwise -if you wish)

6. The following are some of the ways in which computer mediated communication may be thought to be advantageous to the study process for students with disabilities. Please rate each of them on a scale of 1 - 5 where 1 = ‘little help’ and 5 = ‘helps greatly’ (N.B. Please answer in relation to your experience with Cosy in 1996. First Class will be evaluated next year)

6a. Reduces isolation by allowing easy contact with other students (Please ring a rating)

6b. Enables communication to be received and sent at any convenient time of day or night (Please ring a rating)
6c. Use of keyboard to pre-prepare messages off line enables students to work at own pace
(Please ring a rating)

6d. Course based Self Help Groups compensate for inability to attend tutorials
(Please ring a rating)

6e. Enables fast and easy sharing of information with fellow students in course based conferences
(Please ring a rating)

6f. Enables fast and easy sharing of useful information with other DOOR-way support group members
(Please ring a rating)

7. Taking into account your answers above, now can you please summarise in your own words what benefits (if any) do you feel you have gained from the use of computer mediated communication to support your studies over the course of the year. Are there any ways in which you think it might be improved?

(Please continue overleaf if necessary, and use the extra space for any other answers on which you would like to expand).
Thank you very much for your help in completing this questionnaire and indeed for your participation and co-operation over the year. (Please complete and return to Margaret Debenham in the stamped addressed envelope provided as soon as possible. Alternatively I can mail the file to you as an appended file in First Class in Word for Windows 6 or Word Perfect 5.x document and it can be completed on your Word Processor and sent back to my First Class mailbox if this is easier. If sending an audio tape of your answers would be a preferable method for you, then this is also perfectly acceptable. Please let me know if you need to use this last method and I will post a blank tape to you)

endques2.doc 10
End of year questionnaire (1996) - CMC Counselling Project for Students with Long Term Health Problems

Name: Signature:
Region: Personal identifier:

Supplementary to Section 2:

Counselling

(N.B. Questions 7a and 7b are repeated from the main questionnaire as a reminder of the context for the new questions. Therefore there is no need to answer Question 7b. in detail; the supplementary questions begin at Question 7c.)

7a. Did you also contact your regional Tutor Counsellor for advice/help during the year? Yes / No

(If no, then the rest of the questions in this supplementary section do not apply)

7b. If Yes, did you find the help given by your Regional Counsellor satisfactory?

1 2 3 4 5

(Please ring a numerical rating where 1 = 'not satisfactory at all', and 5 = 'very satisfactory')

(Expand in your own words if you wish)

New questions begin below

7c. How many times have you contacted your Regional Counsellor during the year? Number of times ....

7d. What was the medium of contact with your Regional Counsellor?

Face to face.... Telephone.... Letter....

endques.doc
14 February 1997
7e. When you contacted your Regional Counsellor how soon did he/she respond?  
   (Please ring appropriate answer)    Same day ....  
            Next day ....  
            Longer ....  
   (Please specify approximately how long) 

7f. Did you find your Regional Counsellor approachable?  
   (Please ring a numerical rating where 1 = ‘not approachable at all’ and 5 = ‘very approachable’)  
   1  2  3  4  5  
   (Please expand your answer in your own words if necessary) 

7g. Did you find that your Regional Counsellor understood the nature of the problem for which you were seeking help?  
   (Please ring a numerical rating where 1 = ‘did not understand well’ and 5 = ‘understood completely’)  
   1  2  3  4  5  
   (Again, expand in your own words if necessary - more space over page) 

7h. Did your Regional Counsellor take any action needed and let you know the outcome?  
   Yes / No
7i. If Yes, did you find the help given by your Regional Counsellor satisfactory?  

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<th>3</th>
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<th>5</th>
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</table>

( Please ring a numerical rating, where 1 = 'not satisfactory at all' and 5 = 'very satisfactory')  

(Expand in your own words if you wish)

---

7j. Did your Regional Counsellor (to your knowledge) contact your online counsellor to liaise on any problems you raised during the year?  

Yes / No

---

7k. If Yes, were you happy with the outcome?  

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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

( Please ring a numerical rating, where 1 = 'not satisfied at all' and 5 = 'very happy')  

(please expand in your own words if necessary)

---

(Many thanks for your help in completing this supplementary questionnaire, and my apologies for the extra work.

As before please complete and return to Margaret Debenham either in the stamped addressed envelope provided, or by whichever of the alternative methods suggested in my original covering letter you have chosen as most convenient to you to complete the original questionnaire.)

endques.doc

14 February 1997
On-line Counselling Research Project: Counsellor Record of Student contacts

Name of student:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of enquiry</th>
<th>Date of response</th>
<th>Phone or e-mail</th>
<th>Nature of enquiry</th>
<th>Action taken</th>
<th>Time spent dealing with query</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Appendix B-5

Table 1: Levels of participation and student assessment of usefulness of facilities on the 'Virtual Campus'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of contact</th>
<th>Usefulness scale (1 - 5)</th>
<th>Number of students</th>
<th>No. of conferences joined</th>
<th>Participation Active (A)</th>
<th>'Lurk' (L) Mixture (M)</th>
<th>Number of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e-mail</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>3 - 4</td>
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<td>1 - 2</td>
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<td>Course based Self Help Groups</td>
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</table>
Institute of Educational Technology

On-line counselling
for students with long term health problems:
a pilot project

Dear Student

In 1994 you were kind enough to complete a research questionnaire from Ms. Margaret Debenham and at that time you expressed an interest in taking part in the second phase of research investigating tutor counselling support via the open University computer conferencing system. This phase is now beginning and a pilot on-line counselling project is being established at the Open University by researchers Ms. Margaret Debenham, Dr. Judith Emms, Dr. Denise Whitelock and Dr. Pat Fung.

You have been selected as a possible participant in this pilot project. On-line counselling which would be made available to participants would be in addition to and would not replace present counselling arrangements. As a research project all information obtained by the research team would be entirely confidential and in any report on the results of the pilot study, no data would be presented in a way that would identify a particular individual.

Students taking part will be provided with high speed modems on loan, but will need to have their own access to a computer which supports Windows software. Help in setting up on-line access to the OU via the modem will be available if needed. The project will use the CoSy4/Wigwam conferencing system as this has an off-line reader facility which reduces phone call charges to a minimum. Participants will receive a contribution towards the cost of those charges.

We do hope that you will be happy to take part in this research. If you would like to participate, it would be very helpful if you would supply, on the attached sheet, the details which we need to know about your current computer access. After completing this, please return the sheet, as soon as possible, using the prepaid addressed label enclosed.

If in the meantime you would like to hear more about the project or to discuss any aspect of it, please do not hesitate to phone Margaret Debenham on 01749 673657, who will be pleased to answer any queries you have.

We wish you every success in your studies this year.

Yours sincerely

Ms. M. Debenham
Dr. J. Emms
Dr. D. Whitelock
Dr. P. Fung

Institute of Educational Technology
Open University.
Do you have access to a personal computer which support 'Windows'?

yes
no

(if you have answered 'yes', please give the following details)

Make of computer________________________
Model of computer_____________________

Do you have access to a telephone line?

yes
no

Do you currently have a modem?

yes
no

(if you have answered 'yes', please give the following details)

Make of modem________________________
Model of modem_____________________

Please return this form, using the enclosed prepaid address label, as soon as possible.

Thank you for your reply.
Dear Student

On-line counselling for students with long term health problems: a pilot project

This letter is in addition to the one which you should receive shortly with your modem pack from the Institute of Educational Technology. It is to let you know that I have ordered your software pack from the Learning Material Office of the Open University and it should reach you shortly. I have also pre-registered you as a CoSy4/Wigwam user so you should receive your CoSy4/Wigwam password in the post from the university within the next few days. NB: This means that you will not have to initiate the on line self registration procedure which you would usually need to do yourself before receiving a password. Once you are on the system you can change your password to something personal to yourself if you so wish.

Please e-mail me once you are on line, or if you have any problems in setting up which can't be sorted out by a call to the help desk (the number will be with the software pack), ring me and I will arrange the necessary help for you. My phone number is ...

Yours sincerely

Margaret Debenham
Research Student
Institute of Educational Technology
The Open University
Walton Hall
Milton Keynes
MK7 6AA
From - Margaret Debenham

To - The six students taking part in my counselling via cmc project re 1996 participation

At the beginning of the 1996 academic year I asked you to say what your expectations were of using cmc for counselling and peer group support. Now that the academic year has ended, this end of year questionnaire seeks to establish how these expectations have been fulfilled or differed.

Please use the extra space allowed at the end of the questionnaire to expand on any answers for which you don't have sufficient space.

If it is difficult for you to complete the questionnaire in handwriting, there are several alternatives we can pursue.

I can send the file to you either as an appended file from within First Class (if you're on line yet) or on a floppy disk if you have either:

- Word for Windows 6
- Word Perfect 5.x (or a more recent version, since later versions will open earlier ones)

Alternatively, I can send you a blank audio tape on which you can record your answers and return to me in the post.

Please let me know if you need to use any of these alternative methods.

NB: Please give your answers in relation to the use of CoSy up to the time of its demise at the beginning of December 1996 and not in relation to the new use of First Class. Many thanks for your help!

Margaret

20 January, 1997
Internal Memorandum

London Region

To: Senior Counsellors in R02, R03, R04, R05

cc: Judy Emms, Margaret Debenham, R03; Bonita Thomson, OSD

From: Senior Counsellor, R01

Date: 13 February 1996

Subject: On-line counselling for students with long-term health problems: R03 pilot project

I have agreed to act as counsellor entirely via email and computer conferencing, for a small group of six students with long-term health problems who have volunteered to participate. The project's "home" is jointly with R03 and IT, but as you will see, both the counsellor and the students could be drawn from any region. In practice the students are from R03 and the adjacent regions, three from R02 and one each from 01, 04 and 05.

The intention is that the on-line counselling which I provide will supplement, not replace, the students' present counselling arrangements, so they will keep their existing counsellors (with whom they may well have built up valuable relationships). The aim is to see what sorts of support can appropriately be delivered by electronic communication, either one-to-one or through a conference with the whole group. We will be using the CoSy4 email and conferencing system.

As provision for students with special needs is delivered in different ways in different regions, it is possible that situations may arise when I need to contact you about a student in your region. I hope you'll be understanding if I ask what seem to be stupid questions about the way things are done!

I am writing to the students' present counsellors to let them know what is happening. I attach a copy of my letter.

The students in your region are:

Many thanks.
The Open
University

Internal Memorandum

London
Region

To: [Counsellor name]
cc: 
From: Senior Counsellor, R01
E-Mail: Ext: 6177
Date: 13 February 1996
Ref: 

Subject: On-line counselling for students with a long-term health problem: pilot project

Dear Colleague

[Student name and personal reference number]

This student, one of your counsellees, has volunteered to be one of a small group for whom I shall be acting as 'electronic counsellor' in 1996. This is a pilot research project to provide on-line support for students with long-term health problems, and the aim is to see what sorts of support can appropriately be delivered through computer-mediated communication.

The student will continue to be allocated to you, and the intention is that the on-line counselling will supplement rather than replace their relationship with you. I shall be contacting them only by email and through computer conferencing, using the CoSy4 system.

If you have any concerns or questions do please contact me, either by email (above), or at the London Regional Centre (0171 791 0575), or at home—my home address is:

[Address details]
Appendix C:  
Documents relating to Intervention Study 2 (Chapter 6)

C1 Student pre-participation questionnaire
C2 Student mid-session questionnaire
C3 Student end of year questionnaire
C4 Pro-forma counsellor record sheet
C5 Counsellor end of year questionnaire
C6 Set of tables relating to Intervention Study 2
C7 Counsellor guidelines
C8 Précis of issues raised from each of the student record sheets
C9 Copy of step by step instructions written by researcher to help participants to set up the off-line reader facility for the FirstClass software
Appendix C-1

CMC Counselling Research Project for Students with Long Term Health Problems: Pre-participation questionnaire (1997 intake)

The questionnaire comes in four sections.

Section 1. Asks about your experience with setting up First Class for 1997

Section 2. Asks about your experience of computer conferencing using Cosy in 1996, as members of doorway and in self help group conferences

Section 3. Asks for a prior statement on your expectations of receiving counselling on line in 1997

Section 4. Asks about your special needs, both for research purposes and to provide information to your on-line counsellor on what help you may need during the course of the year.

(Your counsellor will be provided with a confidential copy of Section 4 only. The other sections are confidential to Margaret Debenham and supervisors.)

Name: Signature:
Region: Personal identifier:
Which course(s) are you studying in 1997?
Which courses have you studied in previous years?

Section 1. System set up - First Class

1. Approximately how long has it taken you to set up your computer and modem to reach the stage of being 'on line' with First Class? Length of time ....
2. In your own words, what problems have you experienced in setting up, if any - With the hardware? ...

With the First Class software?

Section 2: Computer Conferencing - Experience of CoSy in 1996

How useful did you find the following ways of using CoSy in 1996?

(Please ring a numerical rating in each of the following questions on a scale of 1 - 5 where 1 = 'not useful at all', and 5 = 'very useful' and expand on the reasons why in your own words.)

(Please indicate also by ticking the appropriate answer whether you participated actively, 'lurked' or a mixture of the two.)

1. Using e-mail to contact others on a one to one basis

   (Please ring a numerical rating and expand in your own words if you wish)

   Usefulness scale
   1 2 3 4 5
2. Membership of the DOOR _way support conference? (please ring a numerical rating)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Usefulness scale</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

( Tick the appropriate answer to say if you have participated actively, lurked or a mixture of the two)

Active participation ....

'Lurk' ....

Mixture of the two ....

(Please expand on the usefulness - or otherwise- in your own words)

3. Course based Self Help Groups?

(Please ring a numerical rating)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Usefulness scale</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(Please also say how many you joined, if any)

Number joined .......

( Tick the appropriate answer to say if you have participated actively, lurked or a mixture of the two)

Participate actively ....

'Lurk' ....

Mixture of the two ....

(Expand on usefulness - or otherwise in your own words if you wish - more space on next page)
4. Special interest groups?

(Please ring a numerical rating) 1 2 3 4 5

(Please say how many you joined, if any)

Number joined ....

(Tick the appropriate answer to say if you have participated actively, lurked or a mixture of the two)

Participate actively ....

'Lurk' ....

Mixture of the two ....

(Expand in your own words on usefulness - or otherwise - if you wish)
5. Informal 'chat' conferences (e.g. the Log Inn')?
(Please ring a numerical rating)

(Please say how many you joined, if any)

(Tick the appropriate answer to say if you have participated actively, lurked or a mixture of the two)

(Expand in your own words on their usefulness - or otherwise -if you wish)

Usefulness scale

1 2 3 4 5

Number joined

Participate actively

'Lurk'

Mixture of the two

6. The following are some of the ways in which computer mediated communication may be thought to be advantageous to the study process for students with disabilities. Please rate each of them on a scale of 1 - 5 where 1 = 'little help' and 5 = 'helps greatly' (N.B. Please answer in relation to your experience with Cosy in 1996. Your experience of using First Class will be evaluated at the end of 1997)

6a. Reduces isolation by allowing easy contact with other students
(Please ring a rating)

1 2 3 4 5

6b. Enables communication to be received and sent at any convenient time of day or night
(Please ring a rating)

1 2 3 4 5

6c. Use of keyboard to pre-prepare messages off line enables students to work at own pace
(Please ring a rating)

1 2 3 4 5
6d. Course based Self Help Groups compensate for inability to attend tutorials
(Please ring a rating)

6e. Enables fast and easy sharing of information with fellow students in course based conferences
(Please ring a rating)

6f. Enables fast and easy sharing of useful information with other DOOR_way support group members
(Please ring a rating)

6g. Enables informal social contact with the whole student body in open 'chat' conferences
(Please ring a rating)

7. Taking into account your answers above, now can you please summarise in your own words what benefits (if any) you feel you have gained from the use of computer mediated communication (via Cosy) to support your studies over the course of the 1996? Are there any ways in which you think it might be improved?
Section 3: On-line Educational Counselling Support in 1997

Prior Statement

Before beginning this trial in using computer mediated communication for educational counselling support, as a student already experienced in using CMC I would like you to give a short summary in your own words outlining your expectations of the ways in which you feel you may benefit by access to an on-line counsellor.

(You may feel that you don't know what to expect, and it may help to ask yourself why you want to take part. e.g.:-

What do you hope to gain by using the medium for access to a counsellor?

How might this differ (if at all) from traditional methods of access to a regional counsellor by telephone or letter?

Do you foresee any problems in receiving counselling support via this medium?)
Section 4: Special needs

(This section is for research purposes and to help your on-line Counsellor to understand your possible needs for assistance with study during the course of the years experiment. It will be passed to her on a confidential basis. You will continue to have access to your Regional Counsellor in the usual way and your on-line Counsellor will liaise with him her as necessary. You should feel free to contact either the on-line counsellor or your Regional Counsellor as you wish)

Study for continuous assessment

1. Do you have any particular known needs in studying units/set books for assignments?

(Th e following aids can be readily obtained from the Office for Students with Disabilities for many courses. Please tick to indicate whether you use them already, would like to use, do not need, and specify any other needs in the space provided)

- Comb bound units
  - Use already ....
  - Would like to use....
  - Not necessary ...
- Audio taped units
  - Use already...
  - Would like to use...
  - Not necessary
- Other (please specify below)

Tutorials

1. Do you anticipate being able to attend tutorials?

(If 'No' go on directly to Q3)

Yes / No.
2. If Yes, do you use the services of a helper for any of the options opposite?

(Please answer Yes or No for each of the answers opposite and specify any additional needs in the space provided)

Travel ....

Moving around the venue....

Note taking ....

Any other need (please specify below) ....

3. If you are not able to attend, would any of the options opposite be useful if they were available?

(Please answer Yes or No to the questions opposite and expand in your own words if necessary)

A home visit from your tutor to be arranged? ....

A telephone tutorial to be arranged?....

Official course based computer conference (where available) ?...

Course based Self Help Groups?...

Summer School

1. Does your 1997 course have a Summer School? (If 'No' go directly to the next section 'Examinations')

Yes / No
2. If Yes, do you anticipate being able to attend?  
   (If 'No' go directly to the next section 'Examinations')  
   Yes / No

3. If you will be attending, do you need a helper for any of the reasons listed opposite?  
   (Please answer Yes or No to each and expand in your own words if appropriate)  
   Travel ...
   Moving around the campus...
   Helping with personal needs ...
   (getting into bed, bathing, tray carrying etc. Please specify what level of help is appropriate below)
   Note taking ...
   Any other particular known needs (please specify) ...

4. Do you have your own preferred helper who can accompany you?  
   (if Yes go to next section 'Examinations')  
   Yes / No
5. If No, would you like a helper provided by the university?  
   Yes / No

Examinations

1. Do you expect to be able to attend an examination centre to take your course exam this year?  
   Yes / No / Unsure

   (Please ring appropriate answer opposite)

2. If 'No' or 'Unsure' to Question 1, is your Region aware of your need for a home based examination?  
   Yes / No / Unsure

   (Please ring the appropriate answer and if unsure expand in your own word if you wish)

3. Do you expect to need any of the following in the examination (either at a centre or at home)?  
   Extra time ...
   Rest periods ...
   Use of word-processing...
   Amanuensis...
   Large print examination paper....
   Any other particular need (please specify)....
Thank you very much for your help and co-operation in completing this research questionnaire.

Please complete and return it to me, Margaret Debenham as soon as possible. I will send a hard copy to you by post, together with a stamped addressed envelope for return if completed by hand. Alternatively, if you wish, it may either be completed on your word processor and sent back electronically, or by audio tape if either of the two previous methods is difficult. Should you require an audio tape please let me know and I will send a blank one to you in the post.

Section 4 of the pre-questionnaire will also be passed confidentially to Chris Yonle the Senior Counsellor who will be your on-line Counsellor for the year to help her to have a better understanding of your likely needs before the year begins. I shall ask you to complete a further questionnaire about your experiences in mid year and another at the end of the academic year.
Appendix C-2

Margaret Debenham
Mid-year questionnaire (1997) - CMC Counselling Project for Students with Long Term Health Problems

Name:-

Region:-

OU personal identifier:-

Course in 1997:-

The questionnaire comes in three sections.

Section 1
Asks about your use of First Class in the technical sense

Section 2
Asks about your experience of counselling services in the year to date, both on-line, Tutor Counsellor (where appropriate) and Regional Student Services.

Section 3
Asks about your experience of computer conferencing for the support conference and self help groups of various kinds

Section 1: System Usage

1. How often are you logging on to First Class?

\(\text{(Please tick appropriate answer)}\)

- Once a day ....
- More than once a day ....
- Every few days ....
- Once a week ....
- Only occasionally ....

2. Has your usage of the system increased or decreased since the beginning of the year?

\(\text{(Please tick appropriate answer)}\)

- Increased ....
- Decreased ....

\(\text{(If possible, give an estimate of the extent here: e.g. 'increased by 50%')}\)
3. How easy and reliable (in the technical sense) do you find using First Class?

*Please ring a numerical rating where 1 = 'not easy at all' and 5 = 'very easy'*

(It would be helpful if you could give reasons why you find it easy or difficult below)

4. What route of access are you using?

(Please tick appropriate answer)

(If you are using an offline reader to access the system go to Q5. If you are working online go to Q6)

- FC Personal with Windows 95
- Off Road with Windows 3.1
- On line access via Graphical User Interface (GUI) (icon based)
- On line access via Command Line Interface (CLI) (text based)

5. How important is the availability of an offline reader (as opposed to working online)?

(Please tick the appropriate answer and give your reasons in your own words below - more space over page)

- Very important....
- Quite important....
- Not important....
- Happy to work on line....
6. If you are working on line do you find this a satisfactory method of access?

(Please give reasons below. e.g. fo you find there are advantages of access via this route over off line working? Or are you using this route because your computer will not support an off line reader?)

Yes/No

Section 2: Counselling

1. Have you contacted your on-line counsellor regarding any problem (or for information) during the year to date? Yes / No

2a If Yes, please give the number of issues about which you needed to contact her Number of issues ...
2b. Approximately how many times have you made contact regarding each of the issues?  

(Number of times)

Issue 1

Issue 2

Issue 3

(Add more here if necessary)

3a. When you contacted the on-line counsellor how soon did she respond to your e-mail?  

(Please ring appropriate answer)

Same day ....

Next day ....

Longer ....

(Please specify approximately how long)

3b. Was the response time in line with your expectations or did it differ?  

(Please give reasons below)

4. Do you feel that this means of communication was an easy/helpful way to approach the counsellor (or not)?

(Please ring a numerical rating where 1 = 'not helpful at all' and 5 = 'very helpful')

(Please give reasons in the space below- more space on next page)
5. Did you find that your on-line counsellor understood the nature of the problem for which you were seeking help?

Please ring a numerical rating where 1 = 'did not understand well' and 5 = 'understood completely'

(Again, please expand in your own words if necessary)

6. Did your on-line counsellor take any action needed and let you know the outcome?

Yes / No

7. If Yes, were you satisfied with the action taken?

(please ring a numerical rating for your satisfaction level where 1 = 'not satisfied at all' and 5 = 'very satisfied'.

It would be helpful if you could give reasons in your own words below - more space on next page)
8. Were the issues you raised with your on-line Counsellor similar to those about which you would usually approach your regional Tutor Counsellor, or were they different? (Please tick appropriate box opposite and if the issues were different outline the type of issues raised on line in space below)

Similar issues .......
Different issues .......

Tutor Counselling

This section refers to contacts with your usual Tutor Counsellor (regionally based)

9. Have you been allocated to a Tutor Counsellor in 1997? (Please ring appropriate answer. If No go to Q 21)

Yes / No

10. Have you contacted your Tutor Counsellor for advice/help during the year to date? (Please ring appropriate answer. If no, go to Q21)

Yes / No

11. If 'Yes' to Question 10 please give the number of issues about which you have contacted him/her

Number of issues ...
12. Approximately how many times have you made contacts so far regarding each of the issues?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Number of times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>.....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>.....</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(space has been allowed for up to three, with extra space for more if necessary. If you have contacted him/her less than three times, please give answers for the lesser number only)

13. What was the medium of contact with your regional Tutor Counsellor?

- Face to face....
- Telephone....
- Letter....
- E-mail ...

(Please tick and give number of times for each type of contact - approximately if you don't know exactly)

14. When you contacted your Tutor Counsellor how soon did he/she respond?

- Same day....
- Next day....
- Longer....

(Please specify approximately how long)
15. Did you feel that using this route to access counselling advice from a Tutor Counsellor was an easy/helpful way to make contact (or not)?
(Please ring a numerical rating where 1 = 'not helpful at all' and 5 = 'very helpful')
(It would be helpful if you could expand on the reasons below.)

1 2 3 4 5

16. Did you find that your Tutor Counsellor understood the nature of the problem for which you were seeking help?
(Please ring a numerical rating where 1 = 'did not understand well' and 5 = 'understood completely')
(Again, expand in your own words if necessary)

1 2 3 4 5

17. Did your Tutor Counsellor take any action needed and let you know the outcome? (Please ring appropriate answer)

Yes / No
18. If Yes, did you find the help given by the Tutor Counsellor satisfactory? (Please ring a numerical rating where 1 = 'not satisfactory at all' and 5 = 'very satisfactory'. It would be helpful if you could give reasons for your satisfaction or otherwise in your own words below)

1 2 3 4 5

19. To your knowledge has there been any liaison between your on-line and tutor counsellors on any problems you have raised during the year so far? (If No, go to Q21)

Yes / No

20. If Yes, were you happy with the outcome? (Please ring a numerical rating where 1 = 'not satisfied at all' and 5 = 'very happy')

(If would be helpful if you could give your reasons for your satisfaction or otherwise in your own words below)

1 2 3 4 5
Student Services

21. If you *don't* have a Tutor Counsellor in 1997 have you contacted Student Services at your Regional Centre for help so far during the year? *(go on to Q23. If you *do* have a tutor counsellor go straight to 22)*

Yes / No

22. If you *do* have a Tutor Counsellor, in 1997 have you also contacted Student Services at your Regional Centre for help so far during the year?  

Yes / No

23. Was the advice received from Student Services satisfactory?  

Satisfaction scale

1 2 3 4 5

*It would be helpful if you could give reasons for your satisfaction - or otherwise in your own words below*

24. Please give your reasons for choosing this support route (in preference or additionally to advice from on-line counsellor)
Section 3: Computer Conferencing - experience to date in 1997

As experienced users of computer conferencing from 1996, this section asks about how you are using the new First Class system in 1997.

Please ring a numerical where indicated in the following questions on a scale of 1 - 5 where 1 = 'not useful at all', and 5 = 'very useful' and expand on the reasons why in your own words.

E-mail

1a How often are you using one to one e-mail to contact others?
   - Once a day ....
   - Every few days ....
   - Longer ....
   (Please say approximately how often)

1b How useful have you found it?
   (Please ring a numerical rating and give reasons below in your own words)

Usefulness scale

1  2  3  4  5

1c Are you using e-mail to contact a group of others on a mailing list basis (i.e. as an informal discussion medium?) If No, go to Q 2a
   - Yes / No
1d. If Yes to Q 1c please indicate the number in each of the categories opposite

(I will ask you at the end of the year how useful these have been)

Course based Self Help Group lists ...

Special Interest Group lists ...

Informal Private chat lists ...

2a How useful are you finding access to the DOORway support conference? (please ring a numerical rating)

Usefulness scale

1 2 3 4 5

( please tick the appropriate answer to say if you are participating actively, lurking or a mixture of the two)

Active participation ....

‘Lurk’ ..

Mixture of the two ....

(It would be helpful if you could comment in your own words on the reasons why you find it useful or otherwise below)
2b. How useful are you finding access to the on-line counsellor via the counselling topic in DOORway? (please ring a numerical rating)

(It would be helpful if you could comment in your own words below on the reasons why you find this a useful method of communication with the counsellor - or otherwise)

3. Have you joined any of the OUSA controlled Course-based Self Help Groups so far in 1997? (Please say how many you have joined, if any. Indicate if none were available for your current course)

Please ring a numerical rating to say how useful (or otherwise you are finding them - as before 5 = very useful and 1 = not useful)

(If you tick the appropriate answer to say if you have participated actively, lurked or a mixture of the two)

(It would be helpful if you could comment on the reasons for usefulness - or otherwise in your own words - more space on next page)
4. Have you joined any of the OUSA controlled Special Interest Groups so far in 1997
(Please give number opposite - or none)

Number joined ....

Please ring a numerical rating to indicate usefulness

Usefulness scale

1 2 3 4 5

(Tick the appropriate answer to say if you have been participating actively, lurking or a mixture of the two)

Participate actively ....

'Lurk' ....

Mixture of the two ....

(it would be helpful if you could expand in your own words on the reasons why you have found these useful - or otherwise below)
5. Have you joined any of the OUSA controlled informal 'chat' conferences (e.g. the Log Inn)? (Please say how many you have joined, if any)

   Usefulness scale
   (as before please ring a numerical rating)

   1 2 3 4 5

   Participate actively ....

   'Lurk' ....

   Mixture of the two ....

   (again it would be helpful if you could comment in your own words on the reasons why you find them useful - or otherwise below)

6. Are there any other ways not previously mentioned in which you are using the conferencing system?
(Perhaps new options available on First Class which were not available on CoSy4)

   (please ring answer and if 'Yes' specify reasons below why you are finding these additional ways useful to your studies - or other ways in which they are beneficial to you - more space on next page)
Please sign and date the completed questionnaire below

Signed:

Date:

Thank you very much for your help in completing this questionnaire. It is being sent as both hard copy and as a file attachment via e-mail for those able to receive it via that route. The reason for this is that it may prove easier for some of you to complete it on a word processor than by handwriting. If using word processing to complete, it may be helpful to know that the questionnaire has been set up using the table option in Word for Windows 6. You can either position the cursor in the appropriate box using the mouse button, or move between boxes using the tab key in order to type in your answers.

You will receive a further questionnaire after the end of the academic year. After I have then had the opportunity to look at the overall picture I may ask you if you are willing to be interviewed on your experiences (probably by telephone).

Please complete and return this questionnaire to Margaret Debenham in the stamped addressed envelope provided as soon as possible. If you have used Word Processing to complete, it may be sent back to me as an appended file by First Class. In this case, it would be appreciated if you could also print out a copy if possible. Sign and return it in the sae provided. This will validate the data as your own answers.

Margaret Debenham
1st August 1997
Appendix  C-3

Margaret Debenham
Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) Educational Counselling Project
for Students with Long Term Health Problems:
End of year questionnaire (1997)

The questionnaire comes in four sections. It relates to the period of the pilot project - from February 1997 - December 1997.

Section 1
Asks about your experience of educational counselling services in the year - in respect of on-line counselling, contact with your Tutor Counsellor (where appropriate) and Regional Student Services.

Section 2
Asks about your experience of using computer conferencing for access to the DOORway conference, self help groups of various kinds and for contacting course tutors via e-mail.

Section 3
Asks about your experience of using First Class in the technical sense.

Section 4
Asks three overview questions about your experience of taking part in the project, and for a post-participation statement about how far your prior expectations before taking part have been fulfilled - or have been changed over the course of the project.

Section 1: Educational Counselling

On-line Counselling

1a. Have you been in direct contact with your on-line Counsellor at all during the course of the year (either by e-mail or in a DOORway topic discussion)?

Yes / No

(Please ring the appropriate answer)

(If 'No', go to Q 6a)
1b. Have you contacted your on-line Counsellor by one to one e-mail regarding any problem (or for information) over the course of the year?

(If 'No' go to Q3a.)

Yes / No

(Please ring the appropriate answer)

1c. When you contacted your on-line Counsellor by one-to-one e-mail how soon did she respond?

Same day ....

Next day ....

Longer ....

(Please tick the appropriate answer. If 'longer', please specify approximately how long)

1d. Was the response time in line with your expectations?

Yes / No

(Please ring the appropriate answer)

1e. In your own words please give reasons for your answer. What were your expectations of response time via this medium and why?

2a. Please give the number of issues about which you needed to contact your on-line Counsellor by one to one e-mail

Number of issues ....
2b. What types of issues were they?

- Information in relation to your studies ... 
- Advice in relation to your studies ... 
- Help in arrangements for special needs ... 
- Personal support when experiencing difficulties ... 
- Other (please specify in outline) ... 

(Please tick any of the appropriate answers)

3a. Have you asked questions of the on-line Counsellor in the DOORway counselling topic?

- Yes / No

Have you been involved in a conversation with the on-line Counsellor informally in any of the other DOORway topics?

- Yes / No

(If 'No' to both parts of this question, go to Q4a)

3b. Into which of the following categories did the discussions fall?

(Please give the number of issues raised for each - approximately if you can't remember exactly)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOORway counselling topic</th>
<th>No. of issues</th>
<th>Other DOORway topics</th>
<th>No. of issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information in relation to your studies ...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>Information ...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice in relation to your studies ...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>Advice on study matters ...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information/help in relation to special needs ...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>Informal chat ...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify in outline) ...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>Other (please specify in outline) ...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3c. If you asked questions of the Counsellor in the DOORway counselling topic, what were your reasons for choosing this as the place of contact in preference to one to one e-mail? (if you did not use this facility go to Q4a)

4a. Whether your contact was by e-mail or in DOORway, did you find that your on-line Counsellor understood the nature of the problem for which you were seeking help?  
(Please ring a numerical rating where 5 = 'understood completely' and 1 = 'did not understand well')

4b. How far do you feel that the level of understanding was affected by the use of CMC as the medium of contact?  
(Please answer below in your own words. For example, did setting out the problem in writing help you to explain it better than verbally [or not]?)

5a. Did you feel that the response was appropriate? (e.g. did your on-line Counsellor let you know the outcome if contact with others was needed before she was able to respond?)  
Yes / No  
(Please ring appropriate answer)
5b. Please give reasons below why you were happy (or not happy) with the response via this medium of contact (CMC)?

(For example, if 'Yes', was information provided which helped your study process? Did the on-line Counsellor act on your behalf to make arrangements for special needs? Did an e-mail discussion with the Counsellor help you to make informed decisions about your studies?)

5c. Were the issues you raised with your on-line Counsellor similar to those about which you would usually approach your regional Tutor Counsellor, or were they different?

Similar issues .......
Different issues .......

(Please tick appropriate box)

5d. If the issues were different please give the reasons you felt CMC was the appropriate route by which to raise them.

6a. Did you find it helpful for the on-line Counsellor to be an informal participant in the student-lead DOORway topics? Yes / No

(please ring the appropriate answer)

6b. Please give the reasons why you found it helpful or otherwise below in your own words.
7. Overall, do you now feel that using CMC as the means of communication has provided an easy/helpful way to approach an educational Counsellor (or not)?

1 2 3 4 5

(Please ring a numerical rating where 5 = 'very helpful' and 1 = 'not helpful at all')

Regional Tutor Counselling and Student Services

This section refers to contacts with your usual Tutor Counsellor and Student Services at your Regional Centre.

7a. Have you contacted your Tutor Counsellor or Regional Student Services for advice/help over the course of the academic year?

Tutor Counsellor: Yes / No
Student Services: Yes / No

(Please ring appropriate answer)

(If 'No' to both, go to Q12a)

7b. If 'Yes' to either part of Question 7a, what were your reasons for choosing this support route (in preference or additionally to advice from your on-line Counsellor)?

7c. Please give the number of issues about which you have been in contact.

Tutor Counsellor: Number of issues...
Student Services: Number of issues...
7d. What types of issues were they?  

| Information in relation to your studies | ... |
| Advice in relation to your studies | ... |
| Help in arrangements for special needs | ... |
| Personal support when experiencing difficulties | .... |
| Other (please specify in outline) | ... |

(Please tick any of the appropriate answers and expand on 'other' if necessary)

8a. What was the medium of communication?  

| Tutor Counsellor | Student Services |
| Face to face | Face to face |.... |
| Telephone | Telephone |.... |
| Letter | Letter |.... |
| E-mail | E-mail |.... |
| Fax | Fax |.... |

(Please give the number of times for each type of contact - approximately if you don't know exactly.)

8b. What was your reason for choosing this method of communication?

9. When you made contact how soon was the response?  

| Tutor Counsellor | Student Services |
| Same day | Same day |.... |
| Next day | Next day |.... |
| Longer | Longer |.... |

((Please tick appropriate answer. If 'longer', please specify approximately how long))
10. Did you find that your Tutor Counsellor or the Regional Student Advisor understood the nature of the problem for which you were seeking help? Tutor Counsellor
1 2 3 4 5
Student Services
1 2 3 4 5
(Please ring a numerical rating where 5 = 'understood completely' and 1 = 'did not understand well')

How far do you feel that the level of understanding was affected by the chosen medium of communication?

11a. Did your feel that the response was appropriate? (e.g. did your Tutor Counsellor or Student Advisor let you know the outcome if he/she needed to contact others before responding?) Yes / No
(Please ring appropriate answer)

Please give reasons below why you were happy (or not happy) with the response. Again, how far do you think your answer is affected by your chosen medium of contact?

12a. To your knowledge has there been any liaison between your on-line Counsellor and regional Tutor Counsellor (or Student Services) on any problems you have raised during the year so far? (If No, go to Q13) Yes / No
(Please ring appropriate answer)
12b If 'Yes', did you find it helpful for the on-line Counsellor to act on your behalf as an advocate in this way?
(Please give the reasons why you felt it helpful or not in your own words below).

13. If it were an option to have access either to the services of an on-line Counsellor or a regionally based Counsellor via traditional methods, which would you now prefer?

On-line Counsellor ..... Regional Tutor Counsellor ..... Student Services (Access to Student Advisor on a 'point of need basis') ...... Not sure ..... 
(Please tick an option)

Please give reasons for your answer in your own words.

Section 2: Computer Conferencing

As experienced users of computer conferencing during 1996, this section asks about how you have used the new First Class system in 1997.

E-mail

1a How often were you using one to one e-mail to contact others at the end of the year?

Once a day ....
Every few days ....
Longer ...

(If 'longer', please say approximately how often)
1b How useful have you found this method of communication? 

Usefulness scale

1 2 3 4 5

(Please ring a numerical rating where 5 = 'very useful' and 1 = 'not useful')

Has your opinion changed since completing the mid-session questionnaire? If so, what are the reasons for this?

1c Are you using e-mail to communicate with a group of others on a mailing list basis (i.e. as an informal discussion medium?)

Yes / No

(Please ring the appropriate answer)

(If No, go to Q 2a. If 'Yes' please indicate the number of lists in each of the categories opposite)

Course based Self Help Group mailing lists ...

Special Interest Group mailing lists ...

Informal Private chat mailing lists ...

1d. What were your reasons for using this method of group communication in addition to - or in preference to - formally set up Self Help Groups? Has there been any change in your view since completing the mid-session questionnaire?

2a. Is your course one of those officially supported by a First Class course conference in 1997? (If 'No' go to 2c)

Yes / No

(Please ring appropriate answer)
2b. If 'Yes' to Question 2a, how useful have you found it to have access to the course conference for communication with your Tutor and fellow students?

Usefulness scale

1 2 3 4 5

Active participation ....

' lurk' ....

Mixture of the two ....

(Please ring a numerical rating, where 5 = 'very useful' and 1 = 'not useful')

Please comment in your own words on the reasons why you have found it useful (or otherwise).

2c. Have you used e-mail to contact your Course Tutor (whether or not the course is officially supported by CMC?)

Course officially supported

Yes / No

Course not officially supported

Yes / No

(If 'No' to both parts of the question, go to Q3a)

(Please ring appropriate answer)

(Please ring appropriate answer)

2d. If 'Yes' to either part of Question 2c, how useful have you found it to have this form of access to your Course Tutor?

Usefulness scale

1 2 3 4 5

(Please ring a numerical rating to say how useful (or otherwise you have found it where 5 = 'very useful' and 1 = 'not useful')

Please comment below in your own words on the reasons why you have given this rating to the facility of access to your Course Tutor via this route.

11
Computer Conferences

3a Over the course of the year, how useful have you found it to have access to the following categories of computer conference?

(Please give the number of OUSA controlled conferences in each category in which you were participating at the end of the year (if any) where indicated. If no course based self help groups were available for your current course, please indicate this.

Please ring a numerical rating to say how useful (or otherwise) you have found access to each of the categories of conference - as before 5 = 'very useful' and 1 = 'not useful'.

Tick the appropriate answer to say if you have participated actively, 'lurked' or a mixture of the two)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOORway peer group conference</th>
<th>Usefulness scale</th>
<th>Active participation ....</th>
<th>'Lurk' ....</th>
<th>Mixture of the two ....</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUSA controlled Course-based Self Help Groups</th>
<th>Usefulness scale</th>
<th>No. joined</th>
<th>Level of participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                                               | 1 2 3 4 5       | Main icon ... | Active participation ...
<p>|                                               |                 | Nested topics ... | 'Lurk' .... |
|                                               |                 |              | Mixture of the two .... |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUSA controlled Special Interest Groups</th>
<th>Usefulness scale</th>
<th>No. joined</th>
<th>Level of participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Main icon ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nested topics ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>'Lurk' ....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mixture of the two ....</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUSA controlled informal chat conferences (e.g. The Log Inn)</th>
<th>Usefulness scale</th>
<th>No. joined</th>
<th>Level of participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Main icon ...</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nested topics ...</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>'Lurk' ....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mixture of the two ....</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3b. Please comment below in your own words on the reasons below why you have found access to these conferences useful (or not) over the course of the full year. Has there been any change in your views since completing the mid-session questionnaire?

DOORway

Course based Self Help Groups

Special Interest Groups

Informal chat conferences
4a. Are there any other ways not previously mentioned in which you are using the conferencing system? (If 'No', go to Q5)

Yes / No

(please ring appropriate answer).

If 'Yes', please specify what these are below and say why you are finding these additional ways useful to your studies - or other ways in which they are beneficial to you.

5. Is there any other facility not currently available on the 'Virtual Campus' via First Class which in your opinion would be a useful additional service?

Section 3: System Usage

1. How often were you logging on to First Class at the end of the year?

(Please tick appropriate answer)

Once a day ....

More than once a day ....

Every few days ....

Once a week ....

Only occasionally ....

Not at all ....

2a. Did your usage of the system increase or decrease in the period between completing the mid-session questionnaire and the end of the year?

(If possible, give an estimate of the extent here; e.g. 'increased by 50%')

Increased ....

Decreased ....
2b. What were your main reasons for logging on to First Class over the course of the year?

(Please rank in relative order of importance from 1 - 6 (ranking jointly if appropriate) when 1 = 'most important' and 6 = 'least important')

- Access to on-line Counsellor ....
- Access to course - based conferences (official or Self Help Groups) ....
- Access to peer group in DOORway ....
- One to one e-mail ....
- Access to Special Interest Groups ....
- Access to 'informal chat' conferences .....  

2c. How important (if at all) was your frequency of logging on for access to other services on the 'Virtual Campus' to your level of usage of the on-line counselling facility?

- Very important ....
- Quite important ....
- Not sure ....
- Not very important ....
- Not important at all ....

(Please tick the answer which corresponds most closely with your view)

3a. From a technical perspective, how easy and reliable do you find using First Class?  

1  2  3  4  5  

(Please ring a numerical rating where 5 = 'very easy' and 1 = 'not easy at all')

Please give the reasons for your rating of ease and reliability in your own words below. Has there been any change in your views since completing the mid-session questionnaire?  

15
4a. How important was the availability of an offline reader to your use of the system for online counselling support and access to the ‘Virtual Campus’ (as opposed to working online)?

Very important ....
Quite important ....
Not important ....
Happy to work on line regularly ....

(Please tick the answer which corresponds most closely with your view)

Has there been any change in your view since completing the mid session questionnaire? If so, please give reasons below.

Section 4. Participation overview questions

This section asks three overarching questions about your experience of having access to educational counselling services on-line, and for a post-participation statement.

1. When compared with your experience of studying in previous years, do you feel that access to the services of the on-line Counsellor has had any effect on your motivation to persevere with your studies in 1997?

Has greatly increased motivation ...
Some improvement in motivation ...
A little improvement in motivation ...
No change in motivation level ...
Motivation level less than before ...

(Please tick the answer opposite which corresponds most closely with your view.)
2. In your view, has access to the services of an on-line Counsellor resulted in any change of status of your autonomy as a student when compared with your experience of studying in previous years without this facility? (For example, a greater say in the decision making process in respect of support for your studies?)

Much greater autonomy ...
Some increase in autonomy ...
A little more autonomy ...
No change in autonomy ...
Less autonomy than previously ...

(Please tick the answer which corresponds most closely with your view.)

3. What effect (if any) do you feel that having access to an educational Counsellor on-line has had on your enjoyment of your studies over the course of the year, when compared with your experience of studying in previous years without this facility?

Much greater enjoyment ...
Some improvement in level of enjoyment ...
A little improvement in level of enjoyment ...
No change in level of enjoyment ...
Less enjoyment than before ...

(Please tick the answer opposite which corresponds most closely with your view.)

4. Post participation Statement

At the beginning of your participation in the project I asked you what your expectations were of access to counselling services on-line. Taking into account your answers to questions 1 -3 in this section, please comment in your own words on how far you feel your prior expectations have been fulfilled - or have changed - by your experience of taking part in this pilot project.

(For example, are there any ways in which your experience has been different than you expected? Do you feel that this service has been of benefit to your studies? If so, in what ways has it been helpful? More space on next page)
5. After I have had the opportunity to review all the questionnaires and so to look at the overall picture I may ask you if you are willing to be interviewed on your experiences (either in person or by telephone). Please indicate if you are willing to be interviewed if necessary.

I am willing to be interviewed  

Yes / No

Please sign and date the completed questionnaire below.

Signed:

Date:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. It would be appreciated if you could return it in the stamped addressed envelope provided as soon as possible. If you have completed the form using your computer it may be sent back to me as an appended file by First Class. In this case, please could you also print out a copy if possible, sign and return it in the sae provided. This will validate the data as your own answers.

Margaret Debenham
20th December, 1997
On-line Counselling Research Project: Counsellor Record of Student contacts

Name of student:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of enquiry</th>
<th>Date of response</th>
<th>Phone or e-mail</th>
<th>Nature of enquiry</th>
<th>Action taken</th>
<th>Time spent dealing with query</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Counsellors comments:
(Extra space for report on contact with other support services etc.; e.g. how satisfactory these were found to be)
Appendix  C-5

Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) Educational Counselling Project for Students with Long Term Health Problems

Counsellor end of year questionnaire (1997)

At the beginning of the academic year (1997) I asked for a statement of your prior expectations of using computer mediated communication (CMC) as the interactive medium of counselling contact with the students taking part in the pilot on-line counselling project.

I would now like to ask you to write a post-participation statement, reflecting on how far your expectations were fulfilled or how they may have been changed by your practical experience over the course of the year. To help with the process of reflection, several key questions for which I would like answers are listed below. These may either be answered individually or incorporated into an integrated statement as you wish.

Counsellor questions

How did you view your role as on-line counsellor at the beginning of the study?

Did you expect to initiate contact, respond to student queries or a mixture of the two? Were these expectations fulfilled, or did you find you were using the medium in unexpected ways?

What sorts of issues did you anticipate being raised by the students via CMC? Do these differ from the types of issues which were in fact raised?

Were there any advantages (or disadvantages) in using the written word for interactive communication with students - when compared to face to face or telephone?

Has using the medium of CMC as the medium for counselling contact proved more or less time consuming than expected?

Was the level of contact with students as expected - or more or less than expected? Was contact in the main by one to one e-mail, in the DOORway conference - or a mixture of the two?

To what extent (if at all) do you view the value of any informal contact made with students within the peer group conference as important in establishing the counsellor-client relationship? Has this view changed during the course of the study?
## Table 1
Data relating to setting up hardware and software for main study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student ref. No</th>
<th>Time taken to set up First Class</th>
<th>Type of Access</th>
<th>Problems with hardware</th>
<th>Problems with software</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M07</td>
<td>10 minutes (using CLUI)</td>
<td>CLUI</td>
<td>Pre-Windows PC did not support FC software but worked with CLUI. Used MIRROR comms software with modern modem. Only problem needed to change ‘attention key’ setting because CLUI needs escape key to get out of editor</td>
<td>Using CLUI - computer did not support Windows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M03</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td>Windows 95 with FC Personal</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F06</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td>Off Road with Windows 3.1</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M04</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>Windows 95 with FC Personal</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>DLL file problems. Resolved with help from ACS and another students on-line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M05</td>
<td>1 hour (including setting up FC Personal off-line reader)</td>
<td>Windows 95 with FC Personal</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F04</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>Windows 95 with FC Personal</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Had some difficulty following instructions for setting up FC 3.5 and FC Personal. Commented that better instructions for use would be useful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F01</td>
<td>4 hours</td>
<td>Windows 95 with FC Personal</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Commented that only problem happened because instructions not followed to the letter on first attempt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M06</td>
<td>4 hours</td>
<td>Windows 95 with FC Personal</td>
<td>one</td>
<td>Modem would not interact with FC software. Eventually gained access via service provider Internet account with guidance on procedure from ACS help desk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M02</td>
<td>11 hours (3 hours for FC, 8 hours for FC personal)</td>
<td>Windows 95 with FC Personal</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Had problems implementing off-line reader, had help from technically literate family member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F05</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Off Road plus Windows 3.1</td>
<td>Took some time to find modem settings</td>
<td>Relatively easy to use and set up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F02</td>
<td>Much longer - weeks-only one log in managed</td>
<td>Windows 95 with FC Personal</td>
<td>complex because of interactions between special equipment needed and software</td>
<td>See hardware, despite much help from special needs technical expert, did not manage to access system satisfactorily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F03</td>
<td>missing data</td>
<td>on line using GUI with Windows 3.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M01</td>
<td>missing data</td>
<td>Windows 95 with FC Personal</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues related to specific course study</td>
<td>Scale 1 - 5</td>
<td>1996 intake (from results of feasibility study) (n=6)</td>
<td>1997 intake (from pre-questionnaire in 1997) (n=7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course based Self Help Groups</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compensate for inability to attend</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tutorials</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enables fast and easy sharing of</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>information with fellow students in</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>course based conferences</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduces isolation by allowing easy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contact with other students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues related to disability problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(This question also relates to social issues)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enables fast and easy sharing of</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>useful information with other peer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>group (DOOR_way) conference group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enables communication to be received</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and sent at any convenient time of</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>day or night</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of keyboard to pre-prepare</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>messages</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>off line enables students to work at</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>own pace</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3
Comparison of ratings of usefulness of various types of Self Help Groups and e-mail for 1996 and 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of contact</th>
<th>Usefulness scale 5 = very useful 1 = not useful</th>
<th>1996 sample of students (from results of feasibility study) (n=6)</th>
<th>1997 new sample of students (from main study pre-questionnaire) (n=7)</th>
<th>Total of 1996 and 1997 samples (re 1996) n = 13</th>
<th>1997 main study end of year questionnaire (n = 12)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peer group conference (DOORway)</td>
<td>5 3-4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-mail</td>
<td>5 3-4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course based Self Help Groups(SHG's)</td>
<td>5 3-4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Interest Groups</td>
<td>5 3-4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Chat Conferences</td>
<td>5 3-4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4
Summary of Rankings for on line services, ranked in order of perceived importance to student from 1-6, where 1 = most important and 6 = least important (M = male; F = female)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
<th>6th</th>
<th>Missing data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DOORway</td>
<td>8 (5M,3F)</td>
<td>1 (0M,1F)</td>
<td>2 (2M,0F)</td>
<td>1 (0M,1F)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course based SHG's</td>
<td>5 (2M,3F)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (0M,1F)</td>
<td>2 (2M,0F)</td>
<td>1 (1M,0F)</td>
<td>2 (2M,0F)</td>
<td>1 (0M,1F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-line counselling</td>
<td>2 (2M,0F)</td>
<td>5 (2M,3F)</td>
<td>1 (1M,0F)</td>
<td>1 (0M,1F)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (1M,0F)</td>
<td>2 (1M,1F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail</td>
<td>2 (1M,1F)</td>
<td>3 (3M,0F)</td>
<td>6 (3M,3F)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (0M,1F)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Interest Groups</td>
<td>1 (1M,0F)</td>
<td>1 (1M,0F)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (0M,1F)</td>
<td>6 (4M,2F)</td>
<td>1 (1M,0F)</td>
<td>2 (0M,2F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal chat conferences</td>
<td>1 (0M,1F)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (1M,0F)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (5M,3F)</td>
<td>2 (1M,1F)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

appendices for main study in 97.doc
Guidelines for counsellor

I'd suggest that we follow the initial pattern used by <name of 1996 feasibility study counsellor> last year in contacting regions and students which was:-

writing to Senior Counsellors to explain about the project

writing to Tutor Counsellors similarly

writing a brief introductory e-mail message to each student

As I know that all individual counsellors have their own style and preferences, after that how often you initiate contact with the students (or if you wait for them to contact you when they feel the need) I leave to you. I'm appending a sheet of what I see as the basic guidelines to follow, but that leaves a lot of scope for individual style.

Hope this is all OK. If you have any questions about any of it, please do ring me (or e-mail <smile>)

Looking forward to a good and interesting year.

All the best

Margaret
Basic guidelines for on-line counselling

- The counsellor should log on once a day (minimum) to pick up any messages from students (but see next item)

- If unavailable for several days for any reason, a brief message should be posted in the counselling topic in doorway to say when the counsellor will next be available.

- Receipt of an enquiry message from a student should be acknowledged immediately the message is read and if the question/problem raised cannot be answered at once the student told that the counsellor will get back to them as soon as possible.

- When appropriate action has been taken, the student should be e-mailed with the result, or with further questions if necessary.

- If it seems desirable to discuss the problem by phone, then the student should be telephoned. CMC should be regarded as a complimentary medium of communication rather than replacing other methods completely.

- A record should be kept of all contacts on the student record form provided.

In terms of the current research I see the role of the on-line counsellor for a group of student with disabilities as that of a 'broker' or 'advocate' providing a bridge between the student and the support services. A major aim should be to preserve student autonomy as far as possible. At the same time the counsellor needs to bear in mind the resource constraints of the institution. So the counsellor should:

- inform the student of the options available

- discuss the possible options with the student using e-mail, (but not exclusively if it seems appropriate to telephone) and involve them in the decision making process as far as possible

- negotiate on behalf of the student with the support services

- inform the student of the result of the negotiations as soon as possible.
Appendix C-8

Student prior statements (1996 and 1997)
Summary of 1997 contacts with on-line counsellor (from counsellor’s précis record sheets)
Full student post participation statements in 1997
(organised as case studies for each student firstly for 1996 sample, followed by 1997 sample)

Continuing students from the 1996 feasibility study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student ref. No.</th>
<th>Summary of on-line counsellor contacts</th>
<th>Course result in 1997</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F01</td>
<td>Student’s prior statement (1996)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am housebound to a great extent and welcome the opportunity to ‘meet’ other people even if the meetings are not face to face. Although I am not really sure what to expect I am very committed to my studies with the OU and can foresee that this medium has great potential for distance learning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F01</td>
<td>The counsellor initiated contact with an introductory e-mail in mid March. The counsellor notes that between March and July there were many exchanges of messages between them, mainly in the counselling topic of the DOORway conference and including many on the subject of CMC itself. In July the student raised a query about wheelchair availability at Residential Summer School. The counsellor contacted the appropriate departments to obtain the necessary information and e-mailed the student with the answer. In August the student had contacted the counsellor regarding serious problems which she had encountered whilst attending the residential school. The counsellor contacted the Residential school Director to liaise with her on this matter. Many messages were exchanged with this student over a period of a few days, both for personal support and to discuss the issues raised by the situation. As a result the student decided to continue with the course and not to withdraw as she had been on the point of doing. The counsellor followed up with an e-mail enquiry a few weeks later to check that the situation had settled down. In early September the student contacted the counsellor for advice on late submission of assignments. The procedures were explained in an exchange of messages and reassurance given. An informal exchange of messages with news of mutual acquaintances took place a week later. In mid September the student contacted the counsellor for further advice on strategy for assignment submission. Towards the end of September there was an exchange of e-mails on preparation for examinations and information on examination techniques. There were also messages on the subject of examinations in the DOORway conference. The counsellor had responded to a conference message to say that the exam had gone well with a personal e-mail to which the student responded with shared pleasure. In December the student posted a conference message to say that she had passed her examination; again the counsellor responded by personal e-mail which had been appreciated by the student. The student completed the course and passed the examination. The counsellor comments that the student was a very active participant in the DOORway conference.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student post participation statement (1997)

When I first became involved with this project I was anxious not to lose my Tutor Counsellor – I was nervous about changing over to someone I had never met, but now that I have become confident with the new ways, I feel easier with the on-line counselling than I ever did with the previous arrangements. I do not feel anxious about contacting my on-line counsellor, I just post the message and know she will get back soonest.
The on-line Counselling service has certainly been of benefit to my studies. When I had a disastrous experience at Summer School and had to return home before I completed the week, my on-line Counsellor helped me regain my confidence and encouraged me back to my studies at a time when all I wanted to do was give up my OU studies altogether. Without my on-line Counsellor I would certainly have given up.

My experiences have been very different from what I expected at the outset. I did not initially believe that having an on-line counsellor could be an improvement on the Tutor Counsellor system — I am now convinced that it has been a change for the better. It's much easier to be able to send a message when one is fit and well enough to send it, rather than trying to put over maybe a serious problem at a time that suits the Tutor Counsellor say between 5pm and 6pm on Sunday evenings. The previous system was very limiting and did not leave room for dealing with emergencies; this is particularly important to someone who cannot predict how they are going to feel on an hourly, let alone a daily basis.

**F02**

**Student's prior statement (1996)**

I hope to have access to other students with disabilities, to be able to have two way contact with students and tutors, both on academic matters and problems relating to studying with the OU and coping with disabilities. To share information not relating directly with the OU

**F02**

**Summary of counsellor records (1997)**

**1994 survey respondent**

The counsellor telephoned the student in early March as she (the student) still had at that point not managed to access the system. This student’s computer needs were very complex and required home visits from a specialist member of staff to set up her computer. In mid March the counsellor attempted to e-mail the student; the attempt failed as she was still not on line. In June the student contacted the researcher to say that her health had deteriorated to the point where she had to give up her studies. At that point her First Class account was set up but she had only once managed to log in successfully (with the help of large print step by step instructions prepared by the researcher). This news was passed on to the on-line counsellor who sent both an e-mail and hard copy letter to the student by post. In August the counsellor sent a further e-mail to enquire after the health of the student and to see if any action was required for the following year. No reply was received, presumably the student was no longer logging on to the system.

**Student post participation statement (1997)**

None, student withdrew early in the year.

**F03**

**Student prior statement (1996)**

Interaction and exchanging of information between those taking part. A fast and easy access to OU libraries etc. Access to other up-to-date information.

**F03**

**Summary of counsellor records (1997)**

**1994 survey respondent**

This student had registered for a course in 1997 and wished to continue to participate in the on-line counselling study, but suffered a number of difficulties, both illness related and personal, at the beginning of the academic year which meant that she did not actually take up her place. She nevertheless asked to remain in the project so as to have access to advice for studying in 1998 and to other students during the year to maintain motivation and reduce isolation. The student had moved house and had problems with her access to the system arising from this. She did not make it on-line until early June. The

**Appendix G (summary of student contacts).doc**
The counsellor initiated contact

I have gained, during 1997, a lot more confidence in the online counselling services which has obviously aided me in many ways. I have been greatly encouraged by having this access to continue with my studies, primarily because of this support.

Substitute for tutorials which I do not attend.

Contact with other students

Social 'chat line'

Problems = if I'm on CoSy too often/for too long, I'll tire and will not have the energy/time in the week to study my course.

At the end of February the student had notified the researcher that his modem had to go for repair. In her introductory message in mid-March, the counsellor acknowledged this as she didn’t not know if he had been able to get back on line by that point. At the end of March the student responded to say he was having problems with using the computer screen for reasons of temporary difficulties with vision as a result of his medical condition. In August the counsellor initiated contact again to enquire both after his health and study progress. No response was received from the student. The student passed the continuous assessment component of his course but did not pass the examination.

Overall - disappointed

Too many messages to read ...

...Too difficult to keep up with messages when only accessing weekly at weekends. Just don’t know who I’m sending messages to. Better if face to face.

I expect this medium to be useful if I have any problems. However, with only doing a half credit and a project instead of an exam I believe that my requirements from the Tutor counsellor will be small.

I will enjoy this medium to ‘chat’ to others and am willing to help in any way.

The counsellor initiated contact with an introductory e-mail in mid March. The student responded immediately with a worry about his examination requirements. The counsellor replied with reassurance. At the end of August the counsellor initiated contact again to check on progress. The student responded with a reply about the course and examination arrangements and course passed.
also social contact about his holiday. The counsellor replied to the course query with suggestions on the assignment substitution rules, in turn the student responded with thanks and chat about his holiday. The counsellor wished him luck with the examinations and exchanged reminiscences on the holiday area. In December the counsellor picked up a posting from the conference of his course result and e-mailed a message of congratulations. The student passed the course successfully. The counsellor further comments that this student was a fairly active user of the ‘chat’ topic of the conference.

Student post participation statement (1997)

I have found that participating in this study has overall enhanced my study in that any questions I have are answered quickly, but by being a member of doorway this has given me both an educational and social perceptive widening contact and enjoyment.

Student’s prior statement (1996)

I don’t really know what I expected other than an easier way for me to communicate with my counsellor and other students. I have found that at times I have been out on my own with my studies as I can’t get to tutorials. Although this has not affected my work it is nice to chat with other students from time to time, as they are going through experiences as I am. This trial is going to give me an outlet. I have never used e-mail before as a method of communication, so I suppose there is the curiosity factor as well and also it gives me a learning opportunity. In the past as far as computers are concerned I have learnt everything I know by trying it out, so this gives me a chance to extend my knowledge.

Summary of counsellor records (1997)

The counsellor initiated contact with an introductory e-mail in mid March and included chat about Maths courses (an area of mutual interest). In August the student initiated contact to ask how things were going. The student responded with thanks and chat about health, examinations and how things were going generally. In later September the student initiated contact about missing Summer School contact (having attended in the past); he confirmed that his examination arrangements were in hand with the regional centre and that his course selection for 1998 was OK. The counsellor responded to all points and chatted about a particular Maths course. The student passed the examination. Whilst the student had rarely actively input messages into the Doorway conference, comments from his questionnaires showed that he had read it regularly and benefited from the postings of the other students.

Student post participation statement (1997)

I feel that the project has exceeded my expectations. The facilities that have been available to me over the last two years due this project have been of great value. I don’t think that there is any area where the project has not provided the facilities that I could need in my personal circumstances. As far as my studies have been concerned, the project has proved extremely successful, my studies have been made more pleasant by the use of the conferences which were available. I have kept very well informed throughout the project, and I feel that the whole project has been very well managed and presented to myself as a participant. I couldn’t really ask for anything else.
New subjects for on-line counselling study in 1997

Student ref. No.  | Summary of on-line counsellor contacts | Course result in 1997
--- | --- | ---
F04 | Student's prior statement (1997) | Course passed

When contacting a counsellor I could be sure of speaking to the same person all the time. I would be able to send messages at my own convenience and at a much lower cost. I would be able to consider the response I get from a counsellor and not have to respond immediately. I would be able to think about what I want to say and what I than the counsellor has said.

One of the problems which might occur is if I want to contact a counsellor urgently, but for whatever reason he/she is off line for a time. A back up phone number would help, or alternative contact.

F04 Summary of counsellor records (1997)

The counsellor initiated contact with an introductory e-mail in mid March. At the end of August the student contacted the counsellor via e-mail regarding a personal difficulty in relation to her studies. The counsellor contacted the appropriate regional Senior Counsellor on her behalf to liaise on this and action was taken in the region. An appreciative message of thanks for her help was received from the student in response. Also at the end of August the counsellor picked up a message from the student in the counselling conference regarding the possible availability of comb bound units in the interim period between the end of the 1996 academic year and beginning of the 1997 year (December to February) so as to get a head start with the next years study. The counsellor contacted the Office for Students with Disabilities and made arrangements for these to be sent early and e-mailed the student to notify her. The student posted a message of thanks in the counselling topic of the conference to share with the group. A little later the counsellor picked up concern from the student on the positioning of the computer screen in a home exam environment to satisfy invigilation requirements. The counsellor made enquiries of her the examination co-ordinator in the own region and was able to reassure the group about this worry. At the beginning of January the counsellor read a conference message from the student on her exam success and course completion in Doorway and e-mailed her congratulations. The student had passed her course successfully.

Student post participation statement (1997)

My expectations were high, and were met in terms of counselling and support. I was helped not only with this year's course, but also in making arrangements for future courses. I also received information, advice and support for issues and problems not directly related to studying, although they do have an effect on my ability to continue studying, eg benefit issues and practical problems. This support would not have been available anywhere else than in Doorway.

Although I did not feel there was any increase in autonomy, I do feel that there is enormous potential for discussing relevant issues with students who are affected by decisions made centrally or at regional level.

Student's prior statement (1997)

Main benefit will hopefully be easy and quick access to a counsellor. (At present sometimes feel 'ought' not bother tutor counsellor with small problems - phoning could be an intrusion. In comparison, e-mailing is not such an intrusion as it can be read by recipient at their convenience and at their own time.)

Appendix G (summary of student contacts).doc
looking forward to access and taking part. I do not foresee any problems.

**Summary of counsellor records (1997)**

An introductory e-mail was initiated by the counsellor in mid March. In April the student mailed the counsellor with an enquiry relating to qualification recognition. The counsellor made the necessary enquiries and responded. At the end of August the counsellor again initiated contact to enquire how things were going. The student responded with concern about special examination arrangements. The counsellor gave reassurance and encouragement and suggested that the student contacted her again if there was no news within a week. At the end of this time, after confirmation with the student, the counsellor telephoned the regional centre concerned on her behalf and established that the necessary arrangements would be made. A progress report was made to the student who responded with more social news. At the end of September a further e-mail from the student was received to say that the special examination arrangements were now made, but were different to those agreed with the on-line counsellor. The counsellor offered to take this up with the regional centre, but at this point the student was happy with the arrangements which had been made. In the same message she made a multiple query relating to qualifications. The counsellor consulted various departments at the university and provided the necessary information. There were further queries on this subject in mid October, again resolved by the counsellor contacting the appropriate departments within the university. At the end of December the student posted news of her examination success in the Doorway conference. The counsellor responded with a congratulatory e-mail.

**Student post participation statement (1997)**

It has been much more useful than I originally expected. I am really going to miss not having on-line access to a counsellor in 1998!

**Student's prior statement (1997)**

I have been fortunate in not needing contact with a counsellor so far - my only difficulty was with the exams and sorted them out with the regional office. I expect this level 3 course to be harder and may need help in selecting next year's course. This method of contact will be easier for me, messages can be sent and received at my convenience.

**Summary of counsellor records (1997)**

The counsellor had initiated contact in mid March with an introductory message. On the same day the student posted a query into the Doorway counselling topic relating to course grades. The counsellor responded in the counselling topic with the correct information. In April the counsellor again initiated e-mail contact. The student responded that she was finding study difficult this year. The counsellor replied with encouragement. At the end of May the student e-mailed the counsellor with queries re the possibility of computer loan for the following year since her existing computer was not advanced and powerful enough to support the course she wished to take. The counsellor sought advice from the Office for Students with Disabilities and various other Open University officers to see if this would be possible. She kept the student informed on progress by e-mail and when the outcome was agreed telephoned the student to share the good news. An exchange of e-mails followed between July and September whilst arrangements were being made to assess the student's special requirements. Further e-mail enquiries were made by the student re this assessment, and on examinations and special sessions at home. The counsellor liaised with the appropriate university officers in these matters. An assessment visit was arranged for September re equipment provision and the student reported with delight on the recommendation that a computer should be provided. At the beginning of January the counsellor...
picked up a conference message re the students examination success and sent a message of congratulation. The student had actively contributed to the DOORway conference on a fairly regular basis during the year.

Student post participation statement (1997)

Previously no contact with counselor and didn’t expect to change, but having her around in doorway made her appear more friendly and approachable even with things I would have thought too trivial to ring a counselor about. Plenty of encouragement when anyone felt low about their abilities.

Student’s prior statement (1997)

I am hoping that having access to an on-line counselor will allow me more freedom to request assistance rather than through a telephone call to my regular counselor. Although my regular counselor has always helped in the past I often felt that my requests were outside his particular area of experience and have been passed around from one advisor to the next. Having to respond immediately to a response to a counselor is sometimes not satisfactory as due to pain and tiredness I need time to consider a reply. I feel that in the past I have sometimes agreed to a solution that was not entirely suited to my needs simply because I was ‘on the spot’ as it were. Perhaps having ‘direct’ access to one experienced counselor from whom I can request help at my own pace, and who is experienced in the many facets of having a disability will make it easier for me to request help when needed.

Summary of counselor records (1997)

The counselor had initiated contact in mid March with an introductory message. She initiated contact with the student again in early April with chat about her own background knowledge of his current course. In August the student initiated contact in relation to a deterioration in his health which was affecting his studies. The counselor gave advice on examination arrangements and offered to liaise with the appropriate Regional Senior Counselor on this. (Researchers note: It is not clear from the records if this offer was take up by the student) In November the student made an enquiry about his next years course The counselor made inquiries from her own regional enquiry service to discover the answer and responded. The student completed the course and passed the examination. (Researchers note: This student had been a very active contributor to the Doorway conference. Later, for health reasons, he had passively read rather than actively contributed, but still commented that he had benefited)

Student post participation statement (1997)

I feel that the availability of an online counselor and discussion group is invaluable to disabled people. It gives a sense of security and a feeling of ‘one-to-one’ support which ‘phoning a regional office for advice does not offer.

Student’s prior statement (1997)

I may not know quite what to expect, but an on-line counselor has to be the route to go down for any student with access to the technology, not just disabled students. Many day to day problems could be sorted out in the form of a ‘virtual’ counsellor or open to all Frequently Asked Questions conference. Leaving aside the more serious and personal ones to be attended to by the counselor who has (of should have) access to any necessary information. This is not always the case with my current counsellor, although he has always been as supportive and helpful as possible and he has stated that he will continue to be supportive although as I understand it, it is now not part of his remit to
do so. What do you hope to gain by using the medium for access to a
counsellor? Greater peace of mind. How might this differ (if at all) from
traditional methods of access to a regional counsellor by telephone or
er letter? Due to the asynchronous nature of the medium it will be
possible to send a message at any time. I don't think my current
counsellor would be happy if I phoned him at 2 in the morning which is
the sort of time I go on line. There should be a significant reduction in
phone bills as well. I would expect a faster and more accurate
response to questions and any necessary paper work could be
exchanged electronically. Do you foresee any problems in receiving
counselling support via this medium? The success or failure of the
system would seem to depend on the dedication of the counsellor

(Researcher's note: the italicised text above comes from the suggested
pointers for questions to be answered from the pre-questionnaire and
inserted into his statement by the student)

M05 Summary of counsellor records (1997)

1994 survey respondent

The counsellor initiated contact in mid March with an introductory message.
In April the student sent her an urgent e-mail message to say that he was
considering withdrawing from his course for reasons of personal stress. The
counsellor was on holiday and so this message was not picked up until some 11
days later. By that time the student had withdrawn from the course. Once the
counsellor picked up the message she had immediately taken steps to contact
the appropriate university departments with a view to possibly arranging re-
instatement on the course. She then e-mailed a suggested way forward to the
student. However, the student did not wish for course re-instatement since he
felt it would be too stressful; he did however, request information on study
packs for future courses. The counsellor collected information and posted it to
the student (by Royal Mail). As a result there was a further exchange of
messages on study packs and the counsellor obtained more information on his
behalf. In July the student mailed an enquiry about a particular course he was
considering for the following year. By unfortunate mishap this again
coincided without the counsellor being absent again for period of a few days
and was not picked up until about a week later. Further information on the
course in question was then provided. Though the student withdrew from his
course early in the year, he nevertheless remained a very active user of the Self
Help Group conferences (including the DOORway conference) throughout out
the year and registered to re-start his studies in 1998.

Post participation statement

Despite the disappointing nature of the experiment of online
counselling, I believe a full time online counsellor would be a boon for
all students not just disabled ones. A properly set up counselling CMC
conference could save both the OU and students a lot of time and
effort. It could be incorporated into the ACS help documents online
already. An FAQ read only conference would be a help.

M06 Student's prior statement (1997)

I am unsure of the potential of this form of counselling. Certainly it
should be more easily available and quicker. However, I am worried
about sensitive medical details being in unknown hands...... but as we
know often it is necessary to divulge details to access a particular
service

M06 Summary of counsellor records (1997)

Course passed

The counsellor initiated contact in mid March with an introductory message.
At the end of March the student responded with slight problems relating to his
course, residential Summer School and examination arrangements. An
interactive exchange of e-mails took place for clarification. At the end of
August the counsellor initiated a message to check on progress and a day later
picked up on an examination worry from the 'chat' topic of the DOORway conference relating to the use of word processing and spell checking in a home based examination. The counsellor discussed the issues raised with her regional examination co-ordinator and the central examinations section of the university and was able to reassure the student within the group discussion area. This had the effect of disseminating the information to the whole group. The counsellor comments that this student was very active within the 'chat' and 'discussion' topics of the DOORway conference. The student passed his continuous assessment and examination.

Student post participation statement (1997)

Expectations have been met. Confidential advice and counsellor's actions most helpful. Would hope Doorway and counselling service may continue

Student's prior statement (1997)

I hope that access to an on-line counsellor will mean there is one person to turn to, as opposed to a regional team. It was upsetting to lose my original tutor counsellor when moving from (name of city) to (name of new city) three years ago ... ... I was losing confidence in the Open University support system. I hope that the on-line counselling will restore this support.

Summary of counsellor records (1997)

The counsellor initiated contact in mid March with an introductory message. The message was not delivered immediately and the counsellor tried again in early April having picked up that the student might be experiencing technical difficulties. (Researchers note: this student was using the Command Line User Interface [CLU] on an old Amstrad machine during the early part of the year) She initiated e-mail contact again the end of August to check how things were going and if examination arrangements were OK. The student responded positively but with query about the examination. The counsellor sought advice from her own regional examination co-ordinator and from the enquiry service and responded with the necessary information. In late September the counsellor responded with a comment on the students excellent assignment results and to a query on voice recognition equipment. At the end of September the student e-mailed with an examination worry related to special needs. Later the same day e-mailed again to say that the problem had been resolved. At the beginning of December the student e-mailed a query re the possibility of a 'yardstick' examination. The counsellor sought advice form the examinations co-ordinator and responded. She also e-mailed congratulations on his examination result which she had picked up from the conference. The student e-mailed his thanks both for the congratulations and for the information provided. The student passed his examination successfully.

Student post participation statement (1997)

My experience his been extremely positive and of great benefit to my studies. Beyond that I am having great difficulty with this question. I cannot remember what my expectations were, if I had any, and I am very bad at writing essays (hence I study Maths). Feel free to ring me if it would help.

appendix G (summary of student contacts).doc
To get doorway onto your off line desktop (and any other conferences or sub conferences that you want) take the following steps:

Switch on modem

Log on to Server using the ‘on line’ option.

You will see the ‘doorway’ icon on your desktop

Click on it once (not twice)

Go to the conference menu and select ‘make alias’

Click on ‘make alias’ once

You should then see another doorway icon appear on your desktop. This is the alias and the one which you’ll take into your off line desktop.

Now look for the icon labelled ‘off line reader’ on the desktop

Click on the ‘doorway’ alias icon (not the original). hold down the mouse and drag the doorway alias icon to the off line reader icon and drop it in (that is release the mouse when you reach it)

The doorway alias will disappear (Don’t worry about this, this is the way you’ll get things off line a little later)

Now click twice on the original doorway icon to open it

You’ll see a row of sub-topics appear at the top of the conference area. These should be

Discussion
Chat
Introductions
Counselling
Technical
Medical
Now go back to the instructions on making an alias and repeat the procedure for each of these sub-topics, dragging each of the aliases into the off line reader icon.

From the file menus select ‘close’

You will then be logged off.

Close down FC on line.

Now open FC personal

Go to the Service menu and select ‘work off line’ and click on it

When the application has opened go again to the Service menu

Select ‘replicate now’ and click on it

This is where the automatic procedure takes over.

Sit back and watch as the modem logs on and downloads the messages.

You will see the messages titles flash up at the bottom of the download box. Wait until it has finished and the lights go out on the modem (leaving only one light showing)

You should now see at the top left of the screen a box showing off line conferences.

Click on that and you should see a desktop box appear which will show all the doorway sub topics.

You can drag each of the sub-topics and drop them back into the doorway icon (it’ll just be a box rather than a pretty picture in the off line reader). then each time you click on the doorway icon the sub-topic will appear at the top within it.
Using the font menu, you can also select any font that you prefer and change the colour of the text, italicise or embolden or underscore. Play around with it and see what you feel is best for you. This way deals with any one particular message, it doesn’t change it for good.

Hope this helps to get you under way and I’ll do my best to talk you through anything you are having difficulty if you ring me.

******************************************************************************

Finding self help groups

Go into First Class on line.

Click on the ACS service news icon.

Click on the Open University symbol icon which is one of the ones at the top of the opened ACS services area.

You will see a map of the campus appear.

Click on OUSA study rooms

Click on the appropriate course area for you

Click on any that you want to join (Follow the steps for making an alias and dragging into the off line reader for each one individually, one at a time)

Close the OUSA study room

Click on the OUSA Common room icon.

Have a look at what is available (there are hobbies and special interest groups of several sorts as well as regional conferences - the Region 3 conference is pretty active) and follow the steps for making an alias and dragging into the off line reader as described before. I suggest that you are fairly choosy about how many you join to avoid having too many messages downloading each time.
Do ring me if you have any questions/ problems with any of this and I’ll do my best to help. I don’t want you to go through the year not knowing how to use the system and therefore not benefiting when a bit of instruction could get you properly underway!
Appendix D:
Documents relating to the Personal Interviews (Chapter 7)

D1 Copy of the invitation to participate letter issued to students

D2 A table giving a breakdown of the numbers of responses

D3 Copy of the request for volunteers posted in regional computer conferences on the ‘Virtual Campus’

D4 Covering letter sent to students with copy of interview transcript

D5 A copy of core questions, prepared by the researcher as an ‘aide memoir’ to ensure that each interview followed a similar framework
Appendix D-1

Dear Student,

Request for help with research

I'm a doctoral research student with the Institute of Educational Technology at the Open University carrying out research into barriers to study for students with long term health problems and ways in which their studies can be supported.

I've recently completed a pilot research study (with the kind co-operation of a group of undergraduate students) in which the computer conferencing system of the university (FirstClass) was used to provide access to the services of an educational counsellor on-line, both by one to one e-mail and within the confidential environment of a peer group conference. I'd now like to interview a further group of students with long term health problems and I wonder if you might be prepared to consider helping me?

To preserve confidentiality, this letter is being sent out on my behalf by your Regional Centre. I will not know the identity of those being canvassed and I will not know your address unless you return the attached form volunteering to take part in this research. No one but myself will read the data on the form. No data will be used in any way which allows an individual to be identified.

The interviews will be planned to take place at the local Regional Centre or at your home, whichever is more convenient to you. To give you an idea of the time involved, I would expect to have covered the most important topics within half an hour.

In order to match the characteristics of those previously included in the research I hope you will be happy to answer the brief questions overleaf. If your answers to Questions 1, 2 and 3 are 'yes', your characteristics do match those of the group we may wish to contact. In this case, I'd be really grateful if you would be happy to return the completed questions using the reply paid label to reuse the envelope in which this arrived not later than Friday December 18th December 1998.
This research will provide us with insights that will be of use in helping the Open University to improve our provision for students with special needs, we appreciate your co-operation if you feel you can help us.

If you reply to this letter, you can expect to hear from us within a week or two after December 18th. I hope to interview those who participate in the study at a time and date in January convenient to them. Look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

Margaret Debenham
Research Student
Institute of Educational Technology, The Open University
If your answer to each of questions 1, 2 and 3 below is ‘Yes’ and you are willing to consider taking part, please could you complete and return the form below not later than 18th December 1998

Name: Personal identifier:
Address: Region:

Nature of health problem

Telephone Number: Courses taken:

1. Do you have a serious health difficulty which affects your studies (for example - but not exclusively - MS, ME)?

2. Have you taken at least two courses previously at undergraduate level?

3. Have you had access to the services of a regional Tutor Counsellor during your studies (not necessarily in the last year, since the counselling arrangements have changed)?

4. Do you have access to a computer?

5. Have you ever used the computer for access to the Open University computer conferencing system?

Please don’t forget to return the form by 18th December 1998. Many thanks!

Margaret Debenham
Research Student
Institute of Educational Technology, The Open University

Appendix D 1-3.doc
Appendix D-2
Analysis of responses to request for volunteers for interview at 5th March 1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>R02</th>
<th>R03</th>
<th>R04</th>
<th>R?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fulfil criteria: have computer but have not had access to conferencing at all</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulfil criteria: have computer and have ‘raw’ access to conferencing</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulfil criteria: have computer and will have access to conferencing next year</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have computer, but have not taken two or more courses</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have computer but health better now</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have computer but have not given name and address</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: Total with computer</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulfil criteria: do not have computer</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No computer now, but has had one and access to conferencing in past</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No computer and have not given name and address</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B: Total without computer</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total A + B</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix D 1-3.doc
Greetings,

I'm a doctoral research student with the Institute of Educational Technology in the OU carrying out research into barriers to study for students with long term health problems and ways in which their studies can be supported using CMC.

I've recently completed a pilot research study (with the kind co-operation of a group of undergraduate students) in which FirstClass was used to provide access to the services of an educational counsellor on-line, both by one to one e-mail and within the confidential environment of a peer group conference.

I'd now like to interview a further group of students with long term health problems who are users of FirstClass and I wonder if anyone would be prepared to consider helping me?

The interviews are likely to be either on-line (by one to one e-mail) or by telephone - but possibly face to face. I need to identify at least six students who match certain criteria and who would be prepared to consider participating.

You would need :-

- to be registered with the Office for Students with Disabilities
- to have a serious health difficulty which affects your studies (for example - but not exclusively - MS, ME)
- to have taken at least two courses previously at undergraduate level
- to have had access to a regional Tutor Counsellor during your studies (not necessarily in the last year, since the counselling arrangements have changed).

If you might be interested in helping with this, I'd be really grateful if you could e-mail me personally (rather than reply in the conference) and we can discuss it further on a confidential basis.

Many thanks! ☺

Margaret

Margaret Debenham
Research Student, Institute of Educational Technology
The Open University
27th May 1999

Dear

Research interview

As promised at the time when I came to see you recently I am enclosing a copy of the transcript of our audio-taped conversation. As I explained when we met, to preserve confidentiality I have changed your name and taken out any other references which might in any way identify you in the transcript, so the data is presented completely anonymously. Please let me know not later than 10th June 1999 if there are any comments you made in the interview that you'd prefer that I didn't quote verbatim. In that case, if it is data that I need to use, I'll paraphrase in any paper that I write, including my thesis. I'm only likely to want to quote short extracts. I'm enclosing a stamped addressed envelope, addressed to my home address, for your reply, if necessary. So long as you are happy with the transcript there is no need to reply to this letter. If I don't hear from you by 10th June I'll assume that that is the case.

Many thanks again for your help with this research which is greatly appreciated. It was very nice to have the opportunity to meet and talk with you. I hope your studies with the Open University continue to go well and bring you much fulfilment and enjoyment in the future!

All best wishes

Margaret Debenham
Research Student, Institute of Educational Technology
Appendix D-5

Researcher’s ‘aide memoir’- broad guidelines for structuring interviews. Questions were adapted for text-based communication online from the guidelines for ‘face to face’ questions.

Questions for sample taken from 1997 on-line counselling pilot

Before starting the interview I’d just like to reassure you, that no data from the interview will be used in any way which allows an individual to be identified.

I’d like to explore with you some of the issues that arose from the on-line counselling project in 1997.

1. So, can I perhaps start the ball rolling by asking you to tell me a bit about your experience of contact with your regional Tutor Counsellor by telephone (either in previous years or during 1997 if you were allocated to one) and we’ll take it from there.

   Prompt: depending on answer. e.g. 'Were there any problems?'
   Possible prompt: 'Why do you think this was?'

2. OK, can we move on to think about 1997 when you had access to an on-line counsellor, on a one to one basis and on a group basis in DOORway? I’d like you to tell me now about how your on-line access to the counsellor affected your use of any other lines of communication (such as Tutor Counsellor by telephone or an advisor at Student Services)

   Prompt: (depending on answer) e.g. 'Why was this do you think?'

3. E-mail is a very different sort of medium to telephone or face-to-face communication and I’m really interested in discovering how one gets to know people using this text based method. So, I’d like you now to think about what impressions of the on-line counsellor you picked up from her messages. Can you tell me what the messages told you about her?

   Prompt: Was your impression affected by interactive communication with the counsellor within the group dimension of DOORway?

   If answer is Yes:--

   Prompt: That’s interesting. Could you explain in what way? What sort of things affected your relationship with the counsellor?

   Prompt: Yes, I understand. Did this affect your willingness to contact her when in need of help?

   ↓
Prompt: In what ways?

4. I'd like you to imagine now a hypothetical situation where some stressful circumstances have arisen which are affecting your studies or ability to study. Let's say for instance that some aspect of your health problem has flared up and become worse. You feel that you need to discuss the difficulties with an educational counsellor. Would you prefer the option of (i) an interactive e-mail discussion (ii) a face-to-face discussion or (iii) a telephone discussion?

(In the case of any answer)

I'd like to explore the reason for this a bit further. Can you explain why you would choose this route?

Prompt: So you are saying then that ...... (summarise understanding of what has been said)

5. Has it made any difference to your studies in 1998 that you no longer had access to the services of an individual counsellor on-line?

Prompt: Has there been any change in your control over your studies?

Prompt: In what ways?

6a. If it were possible to give you a totally free choice, which of the various possible ways to receive educational counselling help/advice would you now choose in the light of your experience?

6b. Some possible counselling options (some of which were mentioned by other students) include the following. Take few moments to look at these. Please could you rank these in your order of preference where 1 = the most preferred option and 6 = the least preferred option, including your own first preferred option.

- Individually allocated regional Tutor counsellor by telephone or face to face
- One of a team of regional advisors (student services) on a 'point of need' basis by telephone
- E-mail access only to one named on-line counsellor
- Access to one named counsellor in both closed peer group conference environment and by one to one e-mail
• E-mail access to any one of a team of regional advisors (student services) on a 'point of need' basis

• Access to an open regional support services conference on the 'Virtual Campus' (run by regional advisors) on a 'point of need' basis

Prompt: Can you tell me why you’ve chosen your most preferred option?

Prompt: Do you think a combination of options would be of value?

Prompt: (if Yes) What do you feel the best combination might be?

AOB: (Open at this stage to pursue any matters of interest which have arisen)

Research questions for new group of FirstClass users (those who have access to the 'Virtual Campus', but have not had access to the educational counsellor or to DOORway)

First of all thank you very much for agreeing to talk to me. Before starting the interview I’d just like to reassure you, that no data from the interview will be used in any way which allows an individual to be identified.

I’d like to explore with you some of the issues concerned with your experience of study with the Open University and in particular about your experience of educational counselling services.

Can I perhaps start the ball rolling by asking you about your special needs?

1. Do you have any specific special needs connected with your studies?

   Prompt: Are you able to attend tutorials?
   
   Prompt: If Yes: Are there any difficulties for you at venues?
   
   Prompt: If No: Does this have any effect on your studies? How about contact with other students?
   
   Has a tutor ever visited you at home for a tutorial? Or have you had a telephone tutorial?
   
   If Yes: Did you find this helpful?
   
   Prompt: What other kind of difficulties would you need to ask for help with?
   
   Prompt: What about handwriting? Are there any problems with this?
2. I'd like you now to tell me about your experience of contact with your regional Tutor Counsellor by telephone (either in previous years or during 1998, if you were allocated to one)

Prompt: Have you found any problems with using the telephone as the medium of contact?

Prompt: That's interesting. So you are saying that ... (summarise here understanding of what student has said)

3. Now that you no longer have a personal Tutor Counsellor, but access to regional Student Services does this make any difference to your contact with a counsellor?

Prompt: What would you say are the advantages or disadvantages of either of these two different routes to obtain advice or help when you need it?

4. I'd like to move on now to think about CMC as a medium of contact. Can I perhaps begin by asking you to tell me about how you came to use the 'Virtual Campus' and we'll take it from there.

Prompt: Do you find it useful?

Prompt: (Margaret's note: sample prompt, to be embroidered according to student response) That's interesting, why is this do you think?

Prompt: Which of the facilities on the Virtual Campus do you use most?

Prompt: Why is this?

5. Can I ask you to look at the items on this list (Margaret's note: hand following list to student at this point) and tell me if you think that access to the 'Virtual Campus' had any effect on any of the items listed?

(Items on list)

Your motivation to study?
Your personal autonomy?
Your enjoyment of your studies?
Your control over the study process?
Prompt: (In case of either improvement or diminishment.) What do you think are the reasons for this?

6. The next question I'd like to ask you, as a user of CMC is, what would be your opinion of e-mail as a possible way to have contact with a personally allocated educational counsellor?

Prompt: That's interesting. Can we explore a bit further what you feel the benefits (or difficulties) might be?

Prompt: What about access to a counsellor in a confidential closed group environment together with other students with similar health problems? Is this an option you would find attractive - or not?

Prompt: Can we explore this a bit further. What benefits or problems might there be do you think?

7. A number of possible options have been suggested for access to educational counselling support. (list options to look at)

(List as for continuing sample)

- Individually allocated regional Tutor counsellor by telephone or face to face

- One of a team of regional advisors (student services) on a 'point of need' basis by telephone

- One to one e-mail access to one named on-line counsellor

- Access to one named counsellor in both a closed peer group conference environment and by one to one e-mail

- E-mail access to any one of a team of regional advisors (student services) on a 'point of need' basis

- Access to an open regional support services conference on the 'Virtual campus' (run by regional advisors) on a 'point of need' basis

Take a few moments to look at the list and if all of the following options were available to you, could you say which you think might be your first choice option?

Prompt: Do you think a combination of some of these options might be of value?

Prompt: (if answer is Yes) What you feel the best combination might be.
AOB: (Open at this stage to pursue any matters of interest which have arisen)

Questions for students with computer but not accessing conferencing

First of all thank you very much for agreeing to talk to me. Before starting the interview I'd just like to reassure you, that no data from the interview will be used in any way which allows an individual to be identified.

I'd like to explore with you some of the issues concerned with your experience of study with the Open University and in particular about your experience of educational counselling services.

Can I perhaps start the ball rolling by asking you about your special needs?

1. Do you have any specific special needs connected with your studies?
   Prompt: Are you able to attend tutorials?
   Prompt: If Yes: Are there any difficulties for you at venues?
   Prompt: If No; Does this have any effect on your studies? How about contact with other students?
   Has a tutor ever visited you at home for a tutorial? Or have you had a telephone tutorial?
   If Yes: Did you find this helpful?
   Prompt: What other kind of difficulties would you need to ask for help with?
   Prompt: What about handwriting? Are there any problems with this?

2. I'd like you now to tell me a bit about your experience of contact with your regional Tutor Counsellor by telephone (either in previous years or during 1998 if you were allocated to one)
   Prompt: Were there any problems?
   Prompt: How do you find using using telephone as the medium of contact?
   Prompt: How about timing of phone calls?
   Did you get to know the counsellor and feel that he/she got to know you - or not?
3. If you no longer have a personal Tutor Counsellor, but access to a duty counsellor at
regional Student Services (your Regional Centre) does this make any difference to your
contact with a counsellor?

Prompt: What would you say are the advantages or disadvantages of either of
these ways to obtain advice or help when you need it?

4. You mentioned that you have access to a computer. Are you using this to support your
studies?

Prompt: In what ways?

Prompt: Have you heard of the Open University computer conferencing system?

Prompt: If No; Explain that a box called a modem enables the computer to be
connected to the Internet (via a service provider - of which there are now a
number of free access providers and also a provider giving access at a special rate
negotiated with an approved provider by the OU). It is then also possible to
connect to the university network and talk to others (students and staff) via text
on the computer screen. It is possible to prepare messages 'off line' and connect
at any time convenient to yourself to both input and pick up messages in one short
phone call. Also you can use e-mail to talk privately one to one, or computer
conferencing to enable interactive communication in a group.

Prompt: If Yes: Would the option of communication with other students and
staff in this way be something you might wish to use – or not?

Prompt: Can you foresee any possible benefits or problems in communicating in
this way?

Prompt: What about the option of talking to an educational counsellor by the
written word via your computer?

5. AOB Open at this stage to pursue further any interesting comments that have arisen

Questions for students with no computer

First of all thank you very much for agreeing to talk to me. Before starting the interview
I'd just like to reassure you, that no data from the interview will be used in any way
which allows an individual to be identified.

Over the course of the next half hour or so, I'd like to explore with you some of the issues
concerned with your experience of study with the Open University and in particular
about your experience of educational counselling services.
Can I perhaps start the ball rolling by asking you about your special needs?

1. Do you have any specific special needs connected with your studies?
   
   Prompt: Are you able to attend tutorials?
   
   Prompt: What other kind of difficulties would you need to ask for help with?
   
   Prompt: What about handwriting? Are there any problems with this?

2. I'd like you now to tell me a bit about your experience of contact with your regional Tutor Counsellor by telephone (either in previous years or during 1998 if you were allocated to one)
   
   Prompt: Have you found any problems with using telephone as the medium of contact?

3. If you no longer have a personal Tutor Counsellor, but access to regional Student Services does this make any difference to your contact with a counsellor?
   
   Prompt: What would you say are the advantages or disadvantages of either of these ways to obtain advice or help when you need it?

4. Are there any ways in which you feel access to a computer might be of any assistance in your studies - or not?
   
   Prompt: What about word processing?
   
   Prompt: If the option of communication with other students and staff by connecting to the university computer conferencing system via computer and your telephone line were available to you, is this something you would be likely to use?
   
   Prompt: Are there any benefits or problems you can foresee using such a method of communication?

5. AOB Open at this stage to pursue further any interesting comments that have arisen